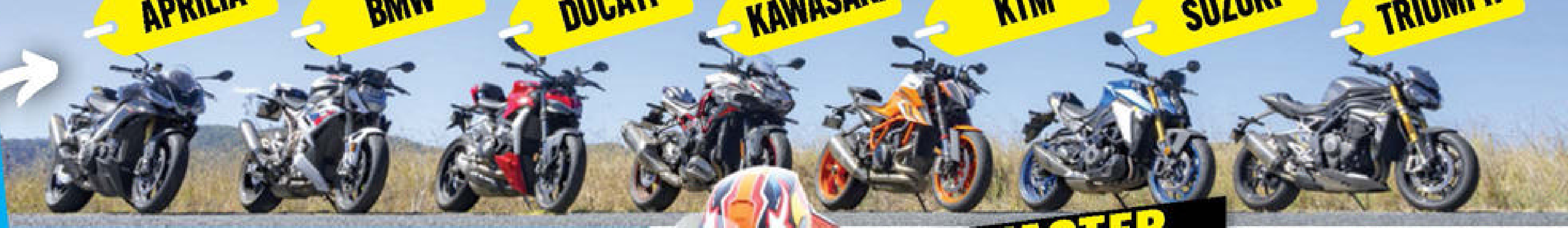
SHOOTOUT
7 NAKED BIKES!
NUDIE RUN



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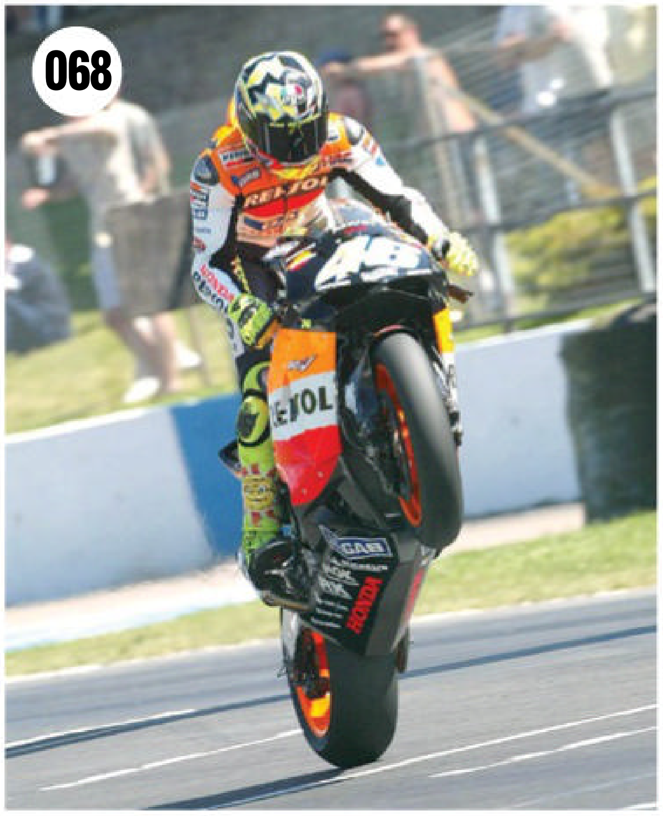

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WORLD LAUNCH: NORDEN 901 EXPEDITION

Hardcore off-road, but in absolute comfort

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WEB HOT!

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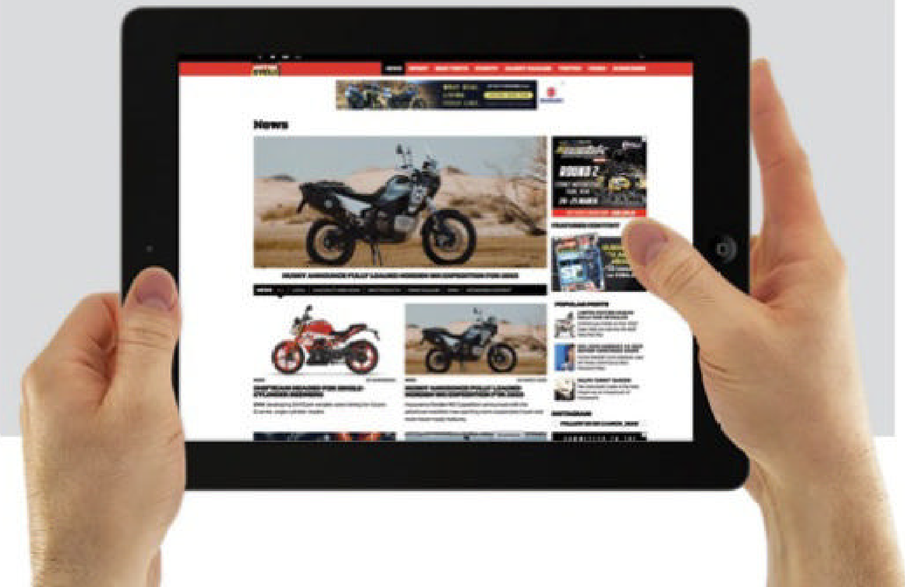

ED'S DESK. DEAN MELLOR

> "YOU CAN ALWAYS COUNT ON MARC MARQUEZ TO LIGHT THE WICK AND SET OFF THE FIREWORKS"

WELL THAT was certainly a nail-biting weekend of racing. For me, it started with a visit to SMSP to catch Round 2 of ASBK under lights… and also under mixed conditions with intermittent showers persisting throughout the evening. Then later that night and on Sunday I was glued to the box for the opening round of the MotoGP season from Portimao.

There were plenty of thrills and spills in the various classes at SMSP, including Mike Jones' engine letting go in the closing stages of Race 1, resulting in his bike catching on fire and the red flag coming out. Up until that point it looked as though Cru Halliday was about to mount a last-minute assault on Josh Waters, but it was not to be with the Ducati rider taking the win.

There was a rain interuption in Race 2 and, after the restart, Waters did a runner but there was plenty of action behind with Troy Herfoss pipping Halliday at the post for second.

Other highlights of the night included Cameron Dunker taking his first Supersport win in his first year in the class – and it's only Round 2 – and watching TZ750-mounted Troy Corser battle it out with FZR1000-mounted Keo Watson in the Superbike Masters.

Over in Portugal, Joel Kelso had me shouting at the telly as he got the holeshot in the Moto3 race from third on the grid and led for the first couple of laps. Although he had dropped back to ninth overall when the chequered flag came out, it was still an impressive result for the CFMoto factory rider, but then it all went bad…

It looked like Joel was reaching for a tear-off when he ran into the back of the celebrating and rapidly slowing winner Daniel Holgado. It was a terriying crash that has left Joel with one broken leg and needing scans on the other. Hopefully he'll be back on the bike soon and fighting for wins.

By contrast, the Moto2 race seemed relatively calm, but come MotoGP you can always count on Marc Marquez to light the wick and set off the fireworks. Fortunately hometown hero Miguel Oliviera wasn't seriously injured when he was punted by MM93.

And although Pecco Bagnaia finished the round with maximum points, there were plenty of signs that 2023 won't necessarily be a Ducati whitewash, with the Aprilias showing fantastic pace and the KTMs performing better than expected. As always, you 'll be able to find full race coverage in this issue, so flick over to page 98 to read all about it.

Deano

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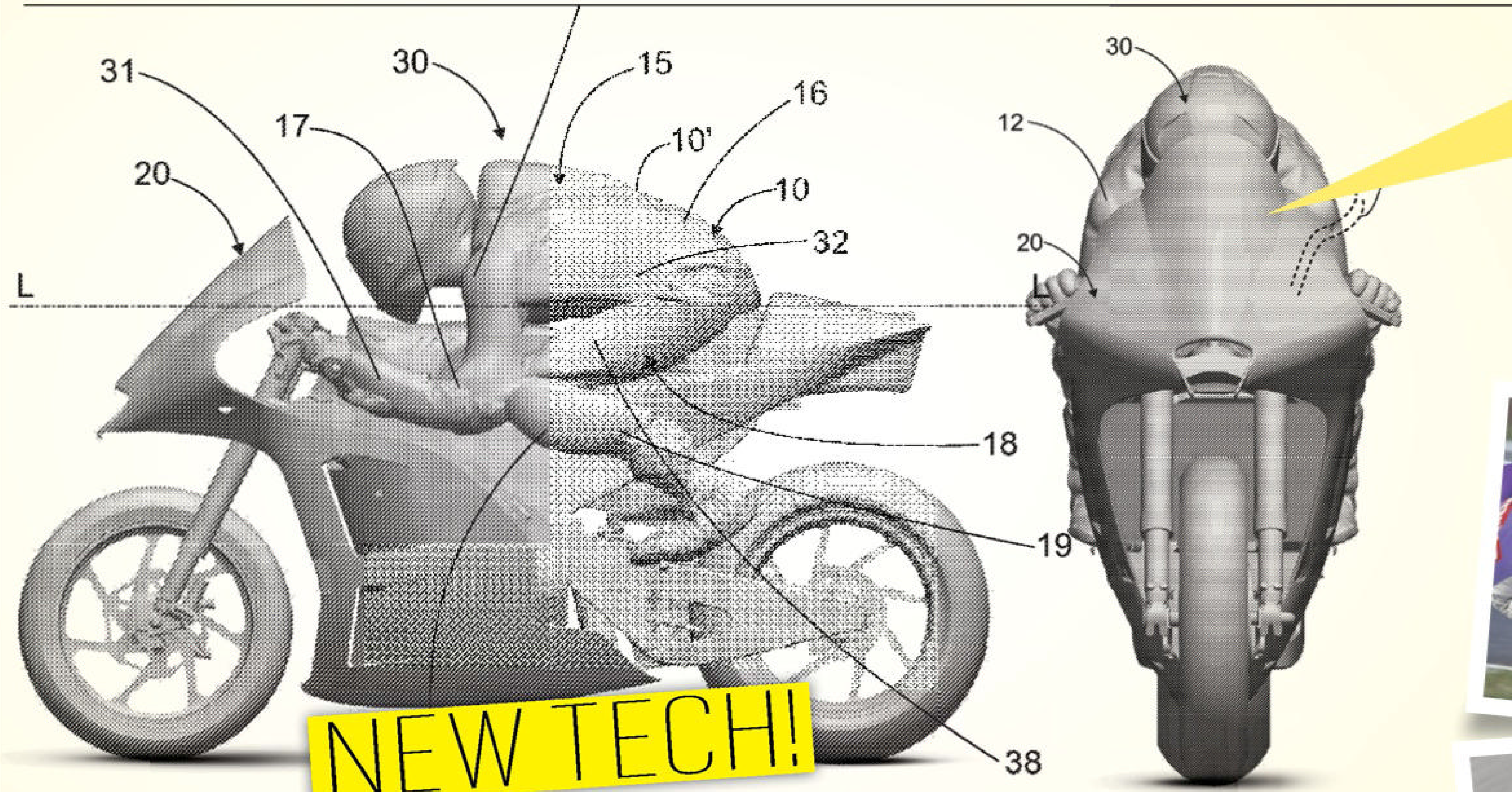

NEW TECH!

AERO TO THE RIDER

Aprilia looks to the rider as the next move in **MotoGP's aero war**

The full extent of Aprilia's aerodynamic advances was on full display at MotoGP's opening round last weekend but behind the scenes its technicians are working on even more radical approaches. This time the focus is on reducing the awkward lump on the top of its RS-GP race bike – the rider.

With strict limits on bodywork changes that can be made during the season, the riders' suits could be an additional route to improved top speeds. So Aprilia has applied for a patent on a set of aerodynamically improved leathers that are intended to get rid of wrinkled leather surfaces and smooth out the bulges and dips on the shape of a tucked-in rider, while simultaneously improving their protective abilities. It all has to be done without hampering all-important rider movement, too.

This plan may sound like overkill but there are big gains to be had from every tiny reduction in drag, so Aprilia – arguably at the forefront of the aero battle on track – could be ahead of the game here.

Aerodynamic humps on the back of leathers have been around for 35 years. They were a happy side effect of a Dainese design intended to improve neck safety by adding padding to an area that back protectors of the time didn't reach. Frankie Chili was the first GP rider to try them, but it was 250cc star Jean-Philippe Ruggia who noticed a reduction in neck strain and buffeting.

Since then, land-speed record riders have often used aerodynamic appendages on leathers and helmets, but the need for free movement on road-racing bikes has prevented a substantial extension of the idea. Aprilia's patent tries to solve that problem by using smooth-surfaced, Velcroed-on panels atop a conventional suit, each adding padding while also providing a more aerodynamic shape.

Each part has a smooth, thin plastic shell over a foam or air-filled centre, adding a layer of cushioning against crash impact as well as aerodynamic advantages. That protective element is important, as it will make it much more difficult for race organisers to try to ban or limit the use of the system.

BEN PURVIS

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE
HUSKY LAYS ON THE TRAVEL PERKS
The Norden 901 Expedition is ready to roam
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MOTOGP'S GREATEST ERA?
THE FIRST GLORIOUS DAYS OF MOTOGP
Bumpy for some, stellar for others
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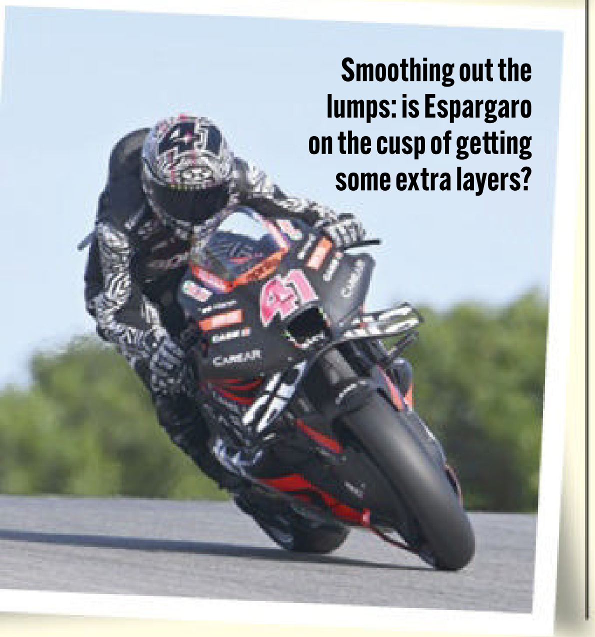
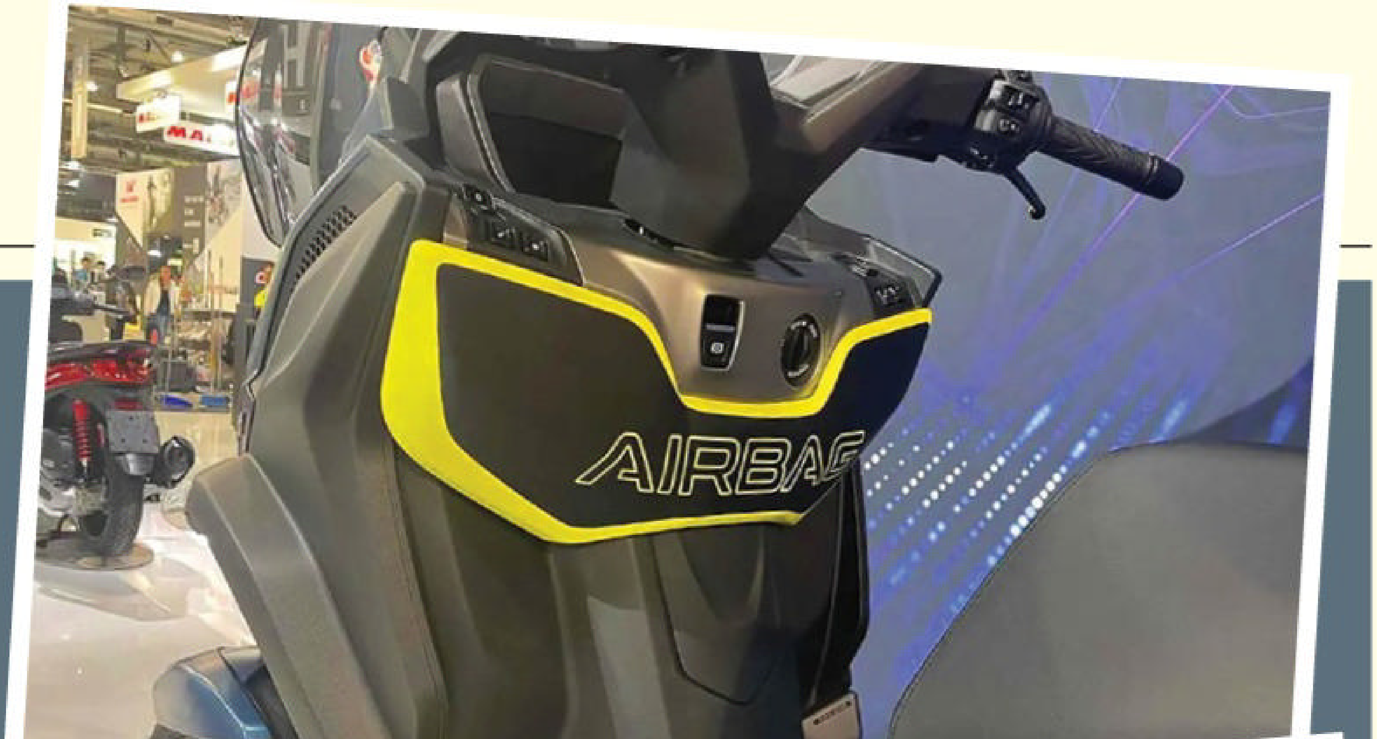
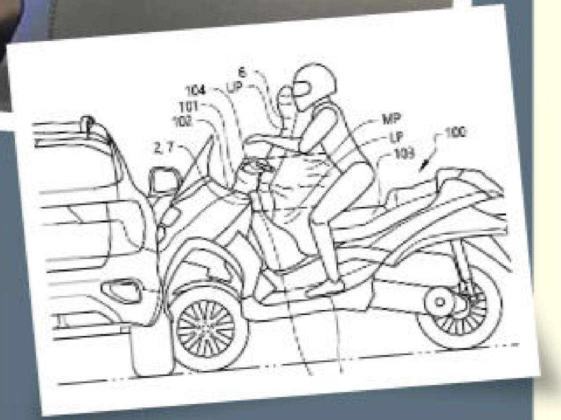
HOW DOES IT WORK?

THE SYSTEM features 10 panels: one on each forearm, one on each upper arm and shoulder, one on each of the rider's sides, one on each thigh, and one on each lower leg. The forearm shells smooth airflow off the 'bars and hands, while the upper arm and shoulder sections give a better flow for air coming off the screen. The side panels help fill in the gap formed between the arms and legs when riders are tucked in on straights, aided by the thigh sections. The lower leg parts incorporate the knee sliders, giving a smoother shape for air to slide over as it comes off the fairing sides.



Smoothing out the lumps: is Espargaro on the cusp of getting some extra layers?





PIAGGIO PUSHES AIRBAG CONCEPT

APRILIA'S PARENT company is really pushing the envelope at the moment with rider tech, not just in MotoGP. Last issue we revealed Honda's plans for detachable airbags; now we can confirm Piaggio will incorporate airbag technology into its MP3 scooter.

At last November's EICMA show, Piaggio displayed a prototype version of the MP3 530 with an airbag built into the front fairing. Now a patent filing shows more detail and why the MP3 is particularly well-suited for this.

Airbags have been available on Honda's Goldwing since 2006 but the idea hasn't spread. That's because very few bikes hold their riders in a predictable position and also have a low centre of gravity that reduces the chance of it flipping forward in a frontal crash.

The long and low Piaggio MP3 fulfils both those prerequisites. As it's targeted at riders who might not be quite ready to accept all the risks involved in a two-wheeled motorcycle, it's also the ideal candidate for an airbag from a marketing viewpoint.

The airbag is huge. Piaggio's EICMA show bike hinted at that, with a large, yellow and black airbag cover stretching across the full width of the inner fairing. The patent confirms that, when inflated, it runs all the way from the rider's knees to their head. It is intended to be used specifically in frontal accidents - typically when a car pulls into the bike's path.

Like the airbags in cars, the system uses an electrically activated gas generator, which is essentially a chemical reaction akin to a small explosion. This creates enough gas to fill the huge airbag in the fraction of a second before it's needed.

The patent shows a couple of alternative ways the airbag could be folded behind its cover, but that cover is a key element of the design. It's intended to split horizontally when the airbag inflates, with the lower section flapping down to become a deflector that directs the bag in the right direction, up towards the rider's head and torso and getting between them and hard points like the handlebar.

The production version is probably not far away, possibly as soon as the 2024 model year. **BP**

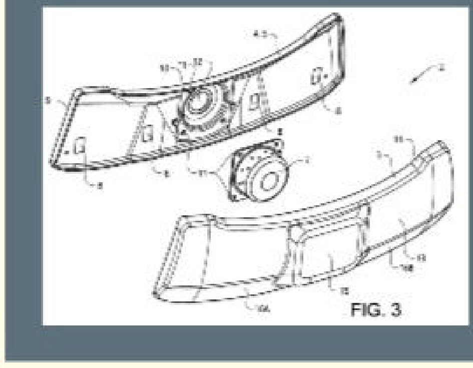


FIG. 3

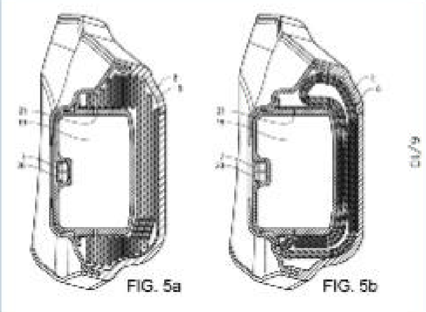


FIG. 5a FIG. 5b

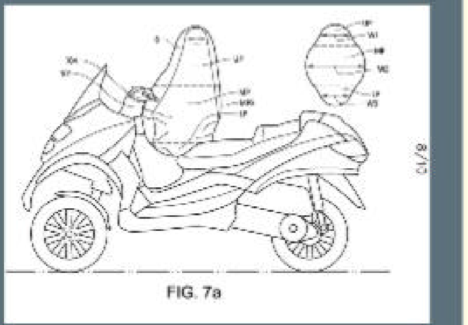


FIG. 7a

IN PIT LANE COLUMN

THE GREAT MOTOGP AERO FEAST
But has it become too sophisticated?
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BAGNAIA DOES THE PORTUGAL DOUBLE
The Italian cranks out a sizzling Rd1
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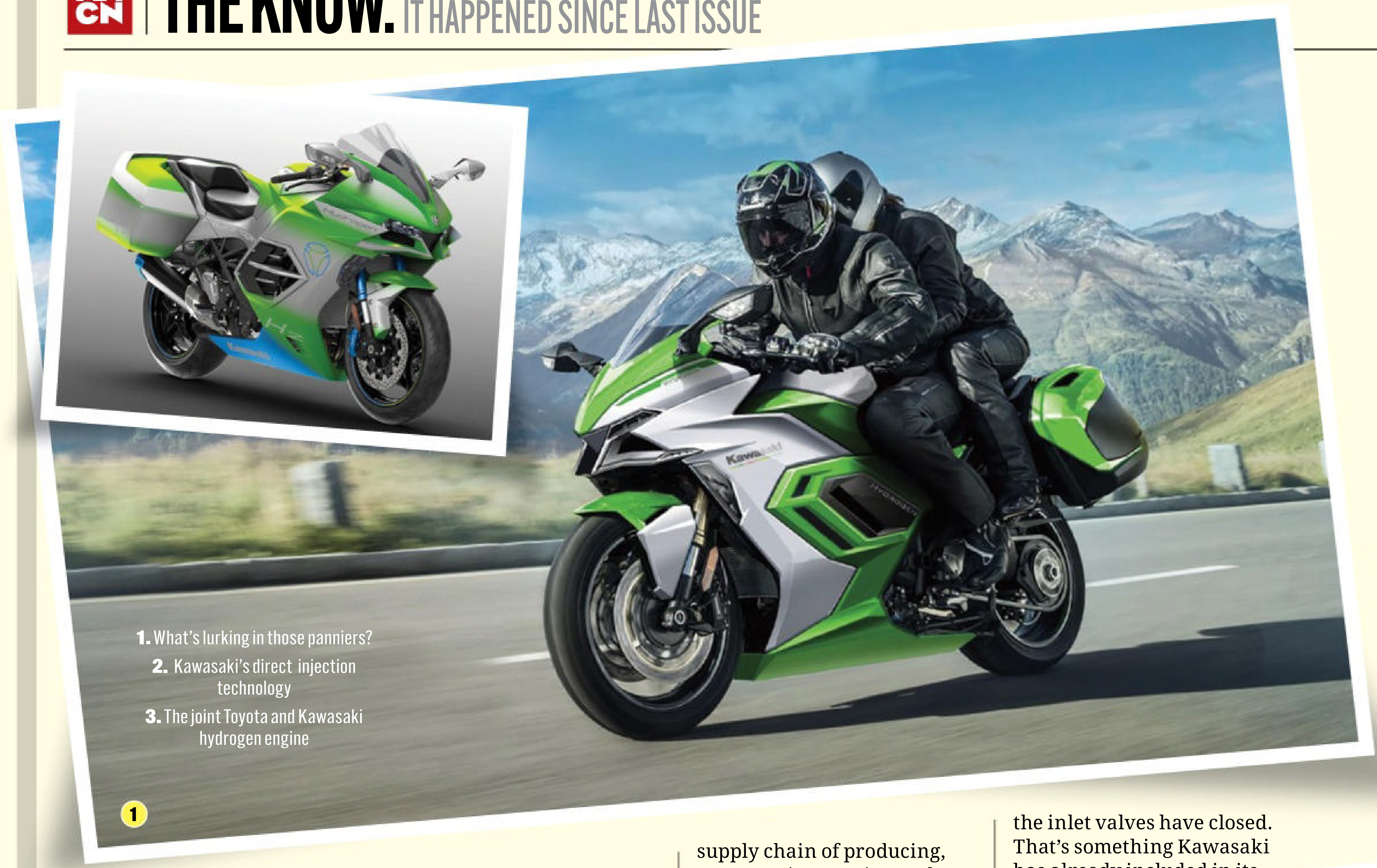


1. What's lurking in those panniers?
2. Kawasaki's direct injection technology
3. The joint Toyota and Kawasaki hydrogen engine

ON THE GAS!

Kawasaki invests in hydrogen future

Kawasaki's plans for a hydrogen future are progressing quickly, and Australia is already part of its strategy. Last week the Japanese giant filed new trademark applications for the title "HySE" and a logo that depicts a water droplet on two wheels (water is the main emissions of hydrogen-fuelled technology).

Motorcycles are a very small part of the overall Kawasaki conglomerate. Kawasaki Heavy Industries covers heavy equipment, aerospace and defence equipment, railway rolling stock and shipping. All these segments are developing alternative fuel strategies.

Last year Kawasaki used a shipment of hydrogen gas from Australia to use in an electricity power generation demonstration in Japan. To do this it built the world's first liquefied hydrogen bulk carrier. The experiment was described by Kawasaki as "a model case in which a supply chain of producing, transporting, storing and using hydrogen for energy utilisation is linked in one supply chain".

The $500m pilot project is led by Kawasaki and backed by both the Japanese and Australian governments.

We've been following Kawasaki's progress with hydrogen power for the past two years. It has been slowed by the Covid pandemic, which put the Australian-Japanese sea transport experiment on hold for 18 months.

Kawasaki's first prototype engine was a direct fuel-injected version of the Ninja H2's supercharged four-cylinder shown in late 2021. The supercharged H2 engine is an ideal candidate for conversion as much more hydrogen is required than petrol to achieve the same amount of power. The big change needed to accommodate hydrogen as a fuel is the adoption of direct injection that adds the hydrogen under extreme pressure to the cylinder after the inlet valves have closed. That's something Kawasaki has already included in its prototype.

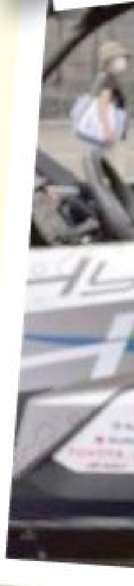
Another issue is how to carry the large amount of hydrogen required on the motorcycle itself.

The fuel storage system Kawasaki is using appears to be similar to what Toyota has created for its hydrogen-fuelled infrastructure, around which an entire prototype community in Japan is being created. In this case, the Kawasaki's panniers are the reservoirs for the hydrogen fuel cells.

The Toyota experiment intends to use swappable hydrogen canisters to power fuel cells for home electricity and to power vehicles. Both Kawasaki and Yamaha are working with Toyota, Subaru and Mazda on the development of hydrogen-fuelled combustion engine technology.

As we've already reported, the two motorcycle companies have taken the lead in engine development, so it makes sense to use

KAWASAKI'S FIRST PROTOTYPE ENGINE WAS A DIRECT FUEL-INJECTED VERSION OF THE NINJA H2'S SUPERCHARGED FOUR-CYLINDER

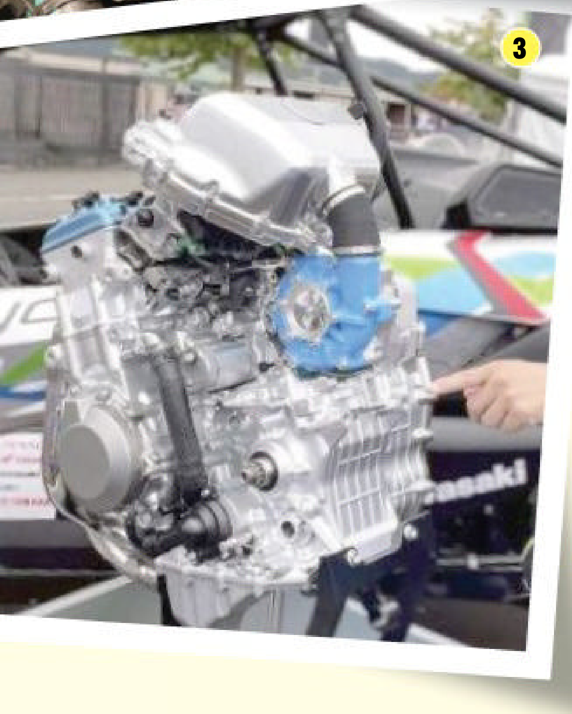


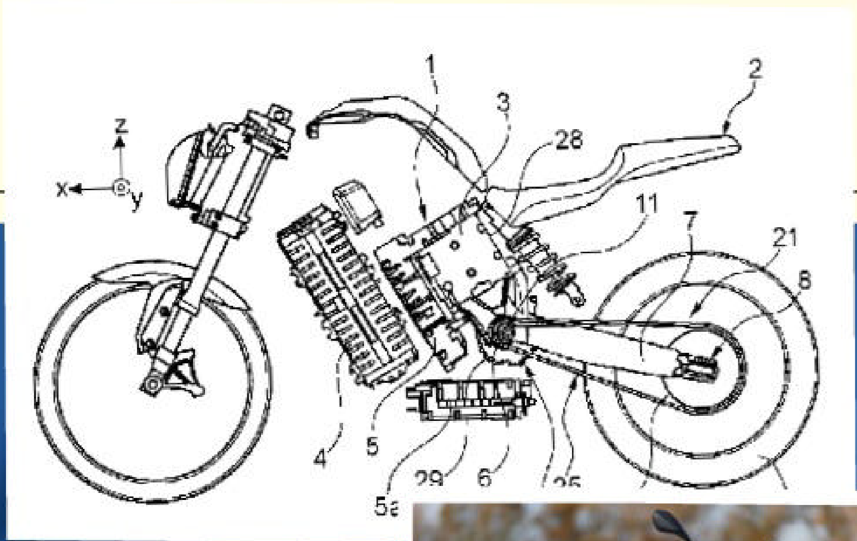
Toyota's hydrogen canister system. This means refuelling should be a simple case of swapping empty canisters for full ones. However, it also means that an entire supply infrastructure would be needed, similar to that required for an all-electric vehicle network.

Rival companies appear to be putting more faith in the idea of synthetically produced e-fuels, which can operate as drop-in replacements for petrol while achieving carbon neutrality from an environmental perspective. MotoGP is pushing this angle for its future racing seasons.

Other motorcycle manufacturers are well advanced on electric power, with Ducati's role in this season's Moto-E class the most obvious. All these alternatives are likely to play a role in the future.

HAMISH COOPER & BEN PURVIS





BMW'S G 310-SIZED EV

A BUDGET version of BMW's E-Power Roadster is under development using elements of the CE-04 electric scooter and single-cylinder G 310 R. This follows a trend AMCN has observed recently where major brands are shying away from the challenge of making high-performance, long-range models in favour of small, city-oriented scooters and commuters.

The cost of batteries and electric motors, as well as the diminishing returns as bigger battery packs add ever more weight, mean it's difficult and expensive to make a long-range, high-performance two-wheeled EV. So while BMW has shown big electric motorcycle prototypes in the form of the E-Power Roadster and Vision DC, the first showroom model will be much smaller.

And that's precisely what's shown in a new patent application, which appears to be built around existing components borrowed from the CE-04 electric scooter. And although it's the size of the single-cylinder G 310 R, it manages to package a surprisingly large electric motor thanks to an unusual layout.

The motor, which looks very similar to the 31kW unit used in the CE-04 scooter, is mounted longitudinally - with the shaft running front-to-rear - but tilted to around a 45-degree angle in the frame. Instead of the conventional reduction gearbox, as used in the CE-04, the motor drives a bevel gear that reduces its speed and changes the direction of rotation to power the front sprocket. A belt final drive, like that on the CE-04, adds another layer of gearing reduction and takes power to the rear wheel.

> A G-SERIES STYLE BIKE COULD BE OFFERED AS A ROADSTER, AN ADVENTURE BIKE AND EVEN A SPORTSBIKE

The battery also appears to be similar to that used in the CE-04, but again is tilted to about 45 degrees in the frame to allow a much shorter wheelbase and higher centre of gravity. The electronic control units for drive and charging are similar to the CE-04, but repackaged to position one in the bellypan while the other is attached to the motor.

The CE-04 is sold in relatively small numbers so its price is inevitably high. By spreading the same components to additional models - and a G-series style bike as seen in the patent here could be offered as a roadster, an adventure bike and even a sportsbike, like the G 310 range - the research and development costs could be contained.

The CE-04 motor isn't too far from the G 310's single-cylinder, 313cc engine. The G 310 manages 25kW, while the CE-04 is 'rated' at 15kW but has a genuine peak of 31kW, so the two aren't far apart on power. In terms of torque the electric bike's 62Nm is more than twice the G310's 28Nm peak, but the CE's single-speed transmission and additional weight mean the two are closer in reality than the bare figures suggest. **BP**

COMMENT

HAMISH COOPER

A race against time

NEWS OF Kawasaki's commitment to hydrogen coincides with the release of the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Scientists from the IPCC, a United Nations body that involves nearly 200 governments, nominate climate failure as the number one global threat over the next decade.

Experts agree that around 80 percent of polluting greenhouse gas emissions comes from burning fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas). They have pleaded for urgent change.

But it's not governments that will lead the change to renewables. Already it's being driven by global manufacturing conglomerates, like Kawasaki, which have identified a business plan that can make them serious money. This is the same strategy that created the industrial revolution of the 1800s and overnight millionaires.

AMCN has already reported on various motorcycle brands' experiments with electric, hydrogen and e-fuels. In most cases their prototypes are joint ventures with universities and investment funds backed by government tax incentives.

Kawasaki's work on a hydrogen alternative and Ducati's role in Moto-E are proof that big changes are in the wind. People who don't believe this have their heads buried in the sands of time, which experts reckon are running out.

BRIEFS. YOUR QUICK FIX

DID YOU KNOW? Not only is it the first time Portugal has hosted the first round of the MotoGP season, it was the first time the season has started in Europe since 2006.

“I remember the classic races of Valentino Rossi vs Nicky Hayden. These guys were heroes. So cool. I thought something thematic was needed that encapsulated it”

Hollywood composer Marco Beltrami explains his season 2023 MotoGP title music.

326

All 22 riders entered for MotoGP 2023 have had GP victories in at least one class, with a total of 326 wins between them. That's a lot of Prosecco!

WICK FLICK TIX

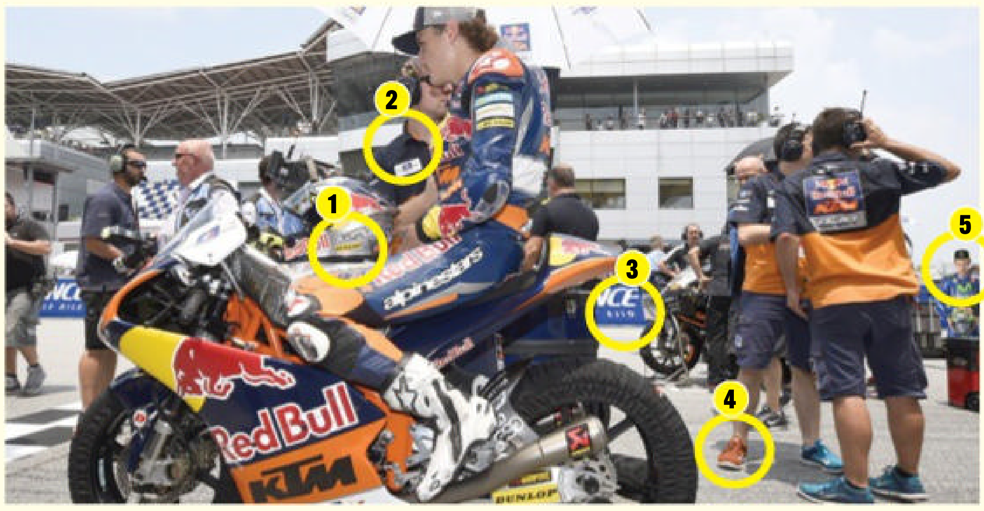
WINNER WINNER CHICKEN DINNER

High five to the 10 winners who picked up double passes to see *John Wick: Chapter 4* starring Keanu Reeves. They are Danny Bell, John Eleftheriou, Dean Louis, Philip Antal, Nathan Tily-Laurie, Joe Bucci, Carol De Giorgio, Brynley Andrews, Sergeja Bosanac and Melissa Stanton. Congratulations, the tickets are in the post!

MENTAL TWISTIES

Last issue's winner of the AMCN neck sock for correctly identifying all five changes to the pic of a KTM-mounted Jack Miller in Moto3 is Troy Damon.

1. Dunlop sticker
2. Logo erased
3. Oils backwards
4. Shoe colour
5. Rossi watching



ROADS OPEN!

A new insurance deal and $170k raised through crowdfunding has put Ireland's North West 200, a vital lead-up to the Isle of Man TT, back on schedule.

DEALER GONGED

Morgan & Wacker Harley-Davidson Brisbane, established way back in 1917, has been named H-D's Australian Dealer of the Year.

HOT & NOT

AMCN'S THERMOMETER

FAREWELL ALF

Alf Robison, a prime mover for Melbourne's annual Ken Blake luncheon and old mate of the great racer, has died.

THANKS, BOOFHEADS

A recent spate of incidents involving reckless riders has Bali authorities planning to ban tourists from renting motorcycles and scooters.

EL GUE
TICHL
NOUAD
LAGOU
NWAR
KAR

PIECE OF CAKE

Sinje Gottwald, account manager for Swedish manufacturer Cake, has become the first person to ride the length of Africa on an electric motorcycle. Gottwald rode her Kalk AP without technical or medical support for 124 days. She carried spare batteries, chargers and electronic parts, along with a laptop in case her bike required a software update or remote support. “Adjusting and lubing the drive chain was basically it, but more than once I was almost run over by cars,” Gottwald said. Cake is expanding its footprint with manufacturing and sales partnerships formalised in several countries.

STRAIGHT-LINE FEVER

After the success of last year's event, with around 160 entries, Queensland's Willowbank Raceway will again host the All Bike Day on 24 June. The event will cater for all skill levels and bikes from newbies on LAMS machinery through to full-spec modified drag bikes. Entries will be online through the Willowbank Raceway website and open a month or so before the event.

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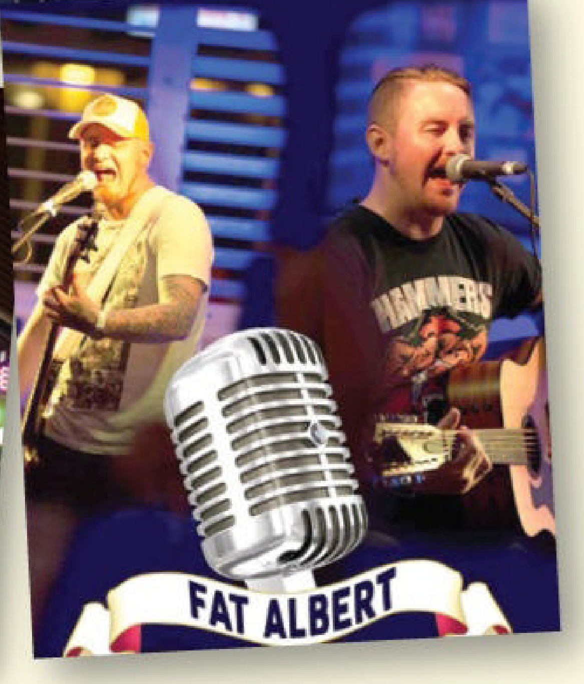
DO NOT MISS IT!



BFO HOTTING UP

Two-day party to kick off BFO

A strong response to the Official BFO warm-up party announced in AMCN last issue has prompted organisers to make it a two-day event.

Running over 22-23 April, the Saturday performance by the Feramones at Kingscliff Beach Hotel will be followed by a Sunday 'recovery session' at the nearby Chinderah Tavern with Fat Albert as the headline act. This hard-rocking band is a staple support for some of Australia's biggest acts, and is a local favourite in Northern NSW and the Gold Coast-Brisbane area.

As well as music, the two days include participation by the local motorcycle industry, bike displays, a fashion parade and giveaways. Entry is free and all riders and all types of bikes are welcome.

Both pub venues are located just off the M1 interstate and within a few kilometres of each other, with the Chinderah Tavern situated on the banks of the Tweed River. Shuttle buses will be provided between the two venues and also to accommodation booked close to the hotels. There is a range of camping, motel and apartment options in the area.

"It's during the school holidays so last-minute bookings could be very difficult," event promoter Chris Beattie warns.

BFO! Warm Up will reveal the schedule for Bike Fest Oz! 2023, which will run from 7-11 June. This event will be based around the Gold Coast's motorcycle retail hub and feature a range of activities, including ride-outs, a trade alley, concert and parade ride.

For more information, visit www.bikefestoz.com.au.

HAMISH COOPER

BRIEFS

A LITTLE BIT OF CLASS

CFMoto has added the neo-retro 300CL-X to its single-cylinder roadbike range. Learner-approved, it adopts the same styling as the larger-capacity, parallel-twin 700CL-X Heritage. It joins CFMoto's other two 300cc singles, the 300SR sportsbike and 300NK street fighter, and is priced at $5990 ride away.

BILLION-DOLLAR BABY

A benchmark 2022 year for Ducati has seen it surpass $1.6b in revenue, a record operating profit and sales. However, to put that into perspective, last year the KTM Group surpassed $3.8b in revenue.

TT COURSE MARSHAL

TT NEEDS YOU

Marshal sign-on has opened for this June's Isle of Man TT. "If you've never marshalled anywhere before you can rest assured you'll be looked after by the Chief Sector Marshal and teamed up with an experienced marshal to learn the ropes," says a TT spokesperson. Visit www.iomttmarshals.com.

BOSS HOG!

Glen Couper has beaten 300 entries to take out Harley-Davidson's Breakout Boss competition, held to celebrate some spectacular mods made to the popular model. The judging panel stated: "Every single piece and part of the bike has been touched, beautifully executed."

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1. John prepares for action **2.** A toe in the water **3.** And away he goes!

WORDS **PETER WHITAKER** + PHOTOGRAPHY **AMCN ARCHIVES**

A MOST EXTRAORDINARY WATER CROSSING

If they reckon it can't be done, trust a bloke on two wheels to give it a crack

Back in the mid-1970s, with the inaugural Katherine Carnival imminent, riding mates John Pfitzner and Lofty Evans found themselves at a meeting hosted by carnival organiser Sylvia Wolfe. Sylvia was casting about for ideas that would provide some novel excitement for tourists visiting the Northern Territory other than the standard bull-riding and camp-drafting demonstrations.

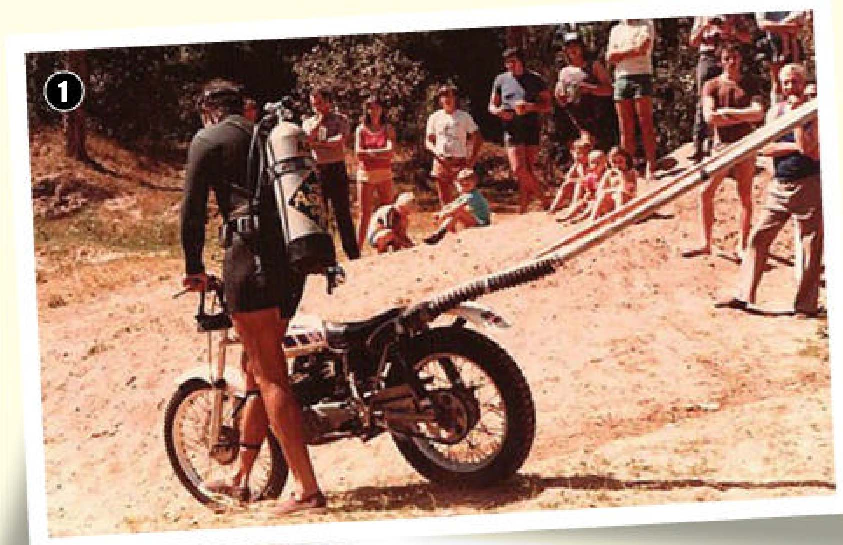
Possibly John and Lofty had had a beer or two when they suggested they could put on a show by riding a bike under the Katherine River. Impossible said the committee, but John – who'd done some scuba diving while sandblasting the insides of oil tankers in Norway – told Lofty 'you get the bike and I'll do the rest.'

Lofty, the local bike dealer, had nothing suitable in his shop, but Hans Van Santen, the Darwin Yamaha dealer, had a demo TY250D trials bike in stock. John and Lofty agreed this would be ideal for negotiating the boulders in the riverbed and set about waterproofing the Yamaha.

Waterproofing was one thing, getting a fuel mix that would work underwater, even with a five-metre snorkel, was another. After much experimentation, one explosion, one fire and one complete engine rebuild, he and John settled on the alcohol-based racing fuel they used in their racebikes.

It worked. The final test of the rebuilt machine took place in the swimming pool of Sylvia Wolfe's Pine Tree Motel.

1



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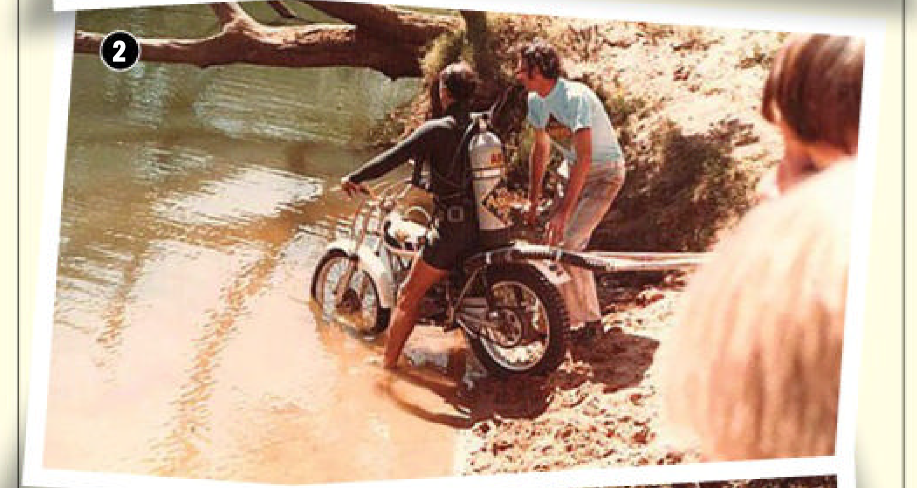

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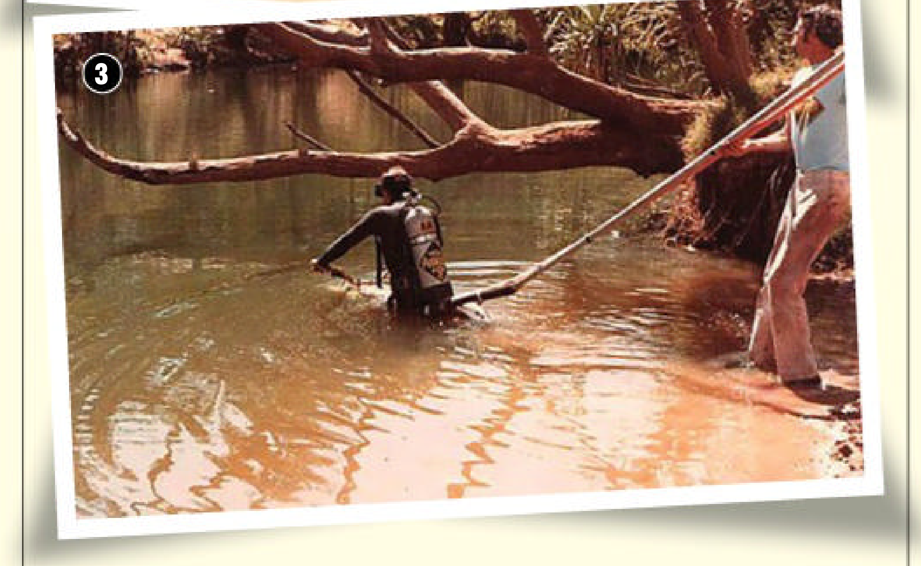


IN THE MELEE THE SNORKEL TOOK ON FIVE LITRES OF WATER, DROWNING THE BIKE

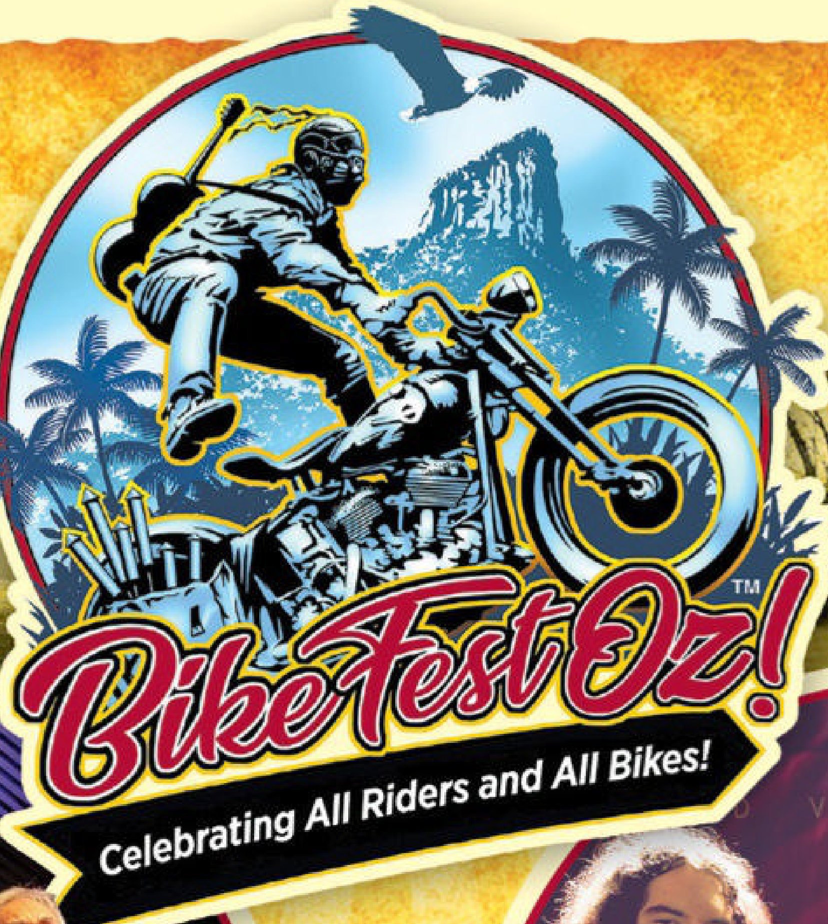
Perhaps way past bedtime was not ideal but it was one of those occasions when forgiveness was easier to obtain than permission. And as Sylvia was one of the organisers of the upcoming Katherine Carnival, forgiveness was forthcoming.

Come the day of the Carnival, John managed to ride halfway across the Katherine riverbed before hitting a submerged refrigerator that had been dumped. This happened at the same time water had been forced down the throttle cable, stalling the bike – at four metres deep the water pressure was double that of the pressure in the motel's swimming pool.

Incredibly, John managed to kick the submerged bike into life and make it to the opposite bank. Perhaps the crew never believed he'd make it that far, as it appears no one had scoped out an easy exit line. On the opposite bank, John faced a two-metre rock ledge. Spectators managed him and the bike over the ledge but in the melee the snorkel took on five litres of water, drowning the bike.

Ten minutes of hand cranking, a new spark plug plus a fresh dose of fuel and John – knowing how to now dodge the sunken fridge – made the return run without incident. Somehow, news of this amazing stunt made it all the way across the Pacific and the boys were contacted by the popular American TV show *Art Baker's You Asked For It.*

John still had his scuba gear and Lofty still had the Yammie and, needless to say, the re-enactment proved just as spectacular as the original stunt…


Bike Fest Oz!™
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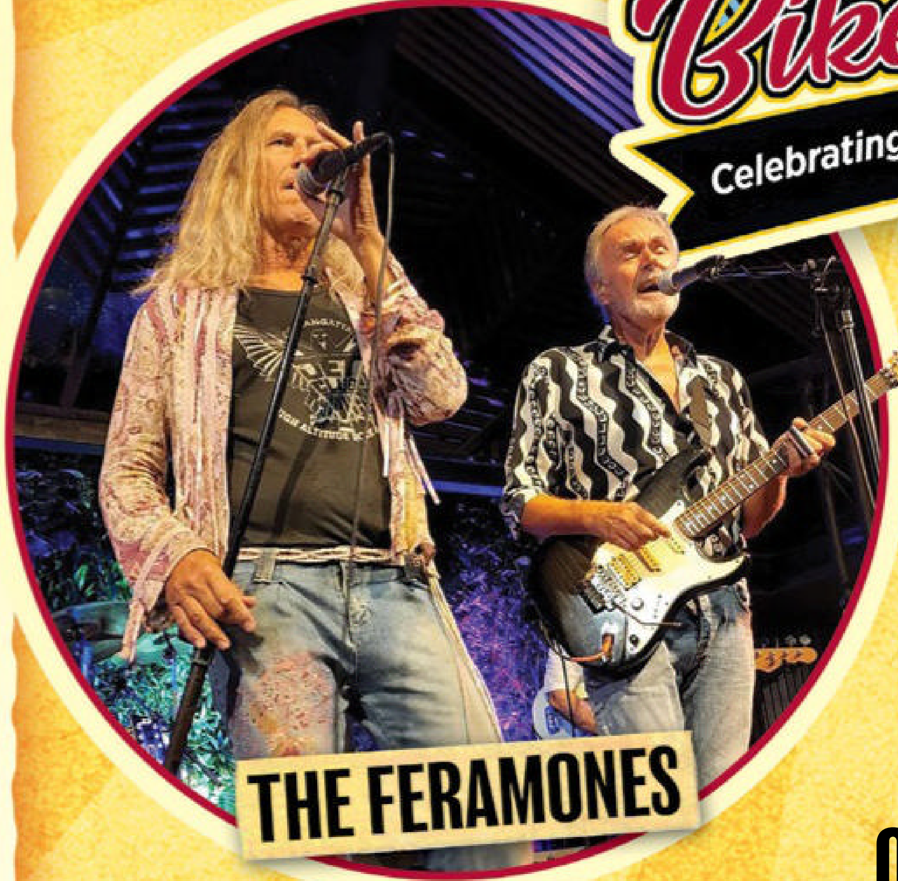
ALL RIDERS AND ALL BIKES WELCOME!



THE OFFICIAL BIKE FEST OZ! WARM-UP SHOW

FEATURING

SATURDAY NIGHT SHOW

THE FERAMONES

Saturday April 22 from 7 til 10pm
Kingscliff Beach Hotel

SUNDAY RECOVERY

FAT ALBERT

Sunday April 23 from 2:30pm
Chinderah Tavern

Lots of fun family activities including a ride-in bike show, door prizes, bike fashion parade and lots of bike-themed entertainment to warm up for the main event: **Bike Fest Oz! June 7-10, 2023** The fun kicks off at Kingscliff at midday, April 22. Come down for the weekend and book accommodation at one of the many local caravan parks, hotels or apartments!

bikefestoz.com.au

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MOTOMUCK
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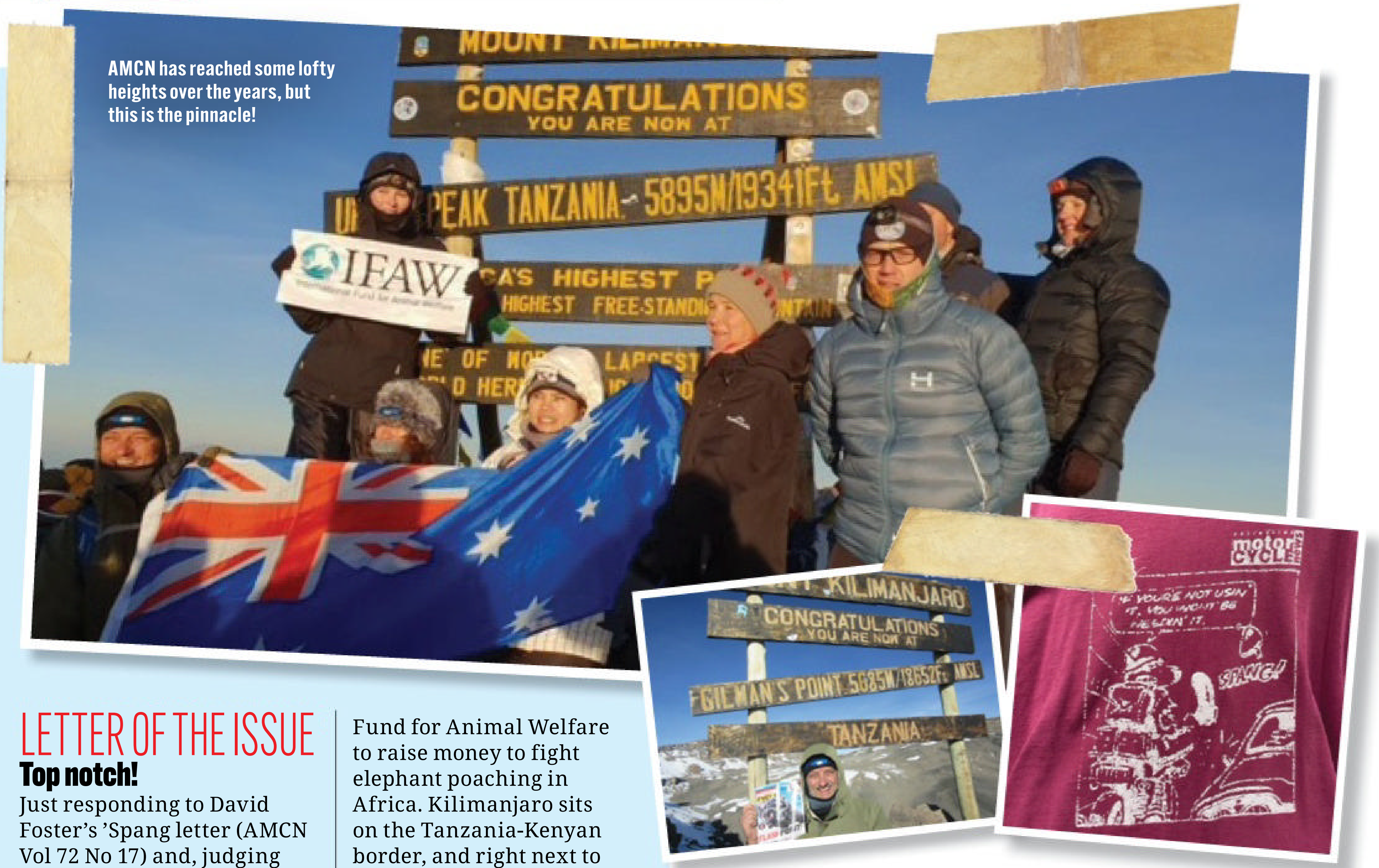
LETTER OF THE ISSUE

Motomuck

Win five litres of Motomuck Motorcycle Cleaner to keep your ride as clean as a whistle. Valued at $59.95!

Include your full name and address in your letter, via post or email. Long letters will be cut to fit, so don't ramble. The views expressed by readers are not necessarily those of the editor.


MOUNT KILIMANJARO
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HIGHEST FREE-STANDING MOUNTAIN
ONE OF WORLD LARGEST
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GILMAN'S POINT 5685M/18652Ft AMSL
TANZANIA
motorCYCLE
IF YOU'RE NOT USIN' IT, YOU WON'T BE NEEDIN' IT.
SPANG!

AMCN has reached some lofty heights over the years, but this is the pinnacle!

LETTER OF THE ISSUE

Top notch!

Just responding to David Foster's 'Spang letter (AMCN Vol 72 No 17) and, judging by the current condition of my nearly 30-year-old Gassit T-shirt, it's definitely time for some more.

I can barely read the words on it as the white paint is flaking off after hundreds of rinse cycles and a few hundred thousand kilometres under motorcycle touring gear and (sometimes) race leathers since 1994.

My beloved red 'Spang tee even accompanied me under serious mountain hiking gear to the summit of Mt Kilimanjaro in February 2019. We had to wear lots of layers, as Kili is almost 6000m high, but only 300km from the equator, so it can go from -10°C to 23°C in the same day.

It was a fundraiser charity climb with the International Fund for Animal Welfare to raise money to fight elephant poaching in Africa. Kilimanjaro sits on the Tanzania-Kenyan border, and right next to the Serengeti plain, so it was fabulous to observe large herds of magnificent intelligent pachyderms up close – and rewarding to raise nearly $40k from our group of nine. They should never be hunted or poached!

It was fun to carry my AMCN to the highest point of the African continent while wearing my Gassit tee as well! All my Gold Coast biking buddies pushed me to write in to Access but it's taken me a good while, so finally here it is. Hope the readers enjoy the pictures as much as I enjoyed getting them, reading this mag for 30 years, wearing the tee and helping elephants. By the way, they last pretty well and can do anything!

Tony Norton
Miami, Qld

SUZUKI
GT250
315

Yes, please!

Re Gassit gear: yes, please! I'm about to embark on a jaunt doing historic motorcycle racing. I'm quite sure I won't be getting any silverware so a Gassit tee will have to do!

Peter Garfield
via email

Me too!

Yes to new Gassit gear. It's one of the reasons I bought a subscription to the magazine; so I could get a new Fred Gassit T-shirt for my husband – I wasn't aware they were currently unavailable. So, yes please!

Jenette & Pete
via email

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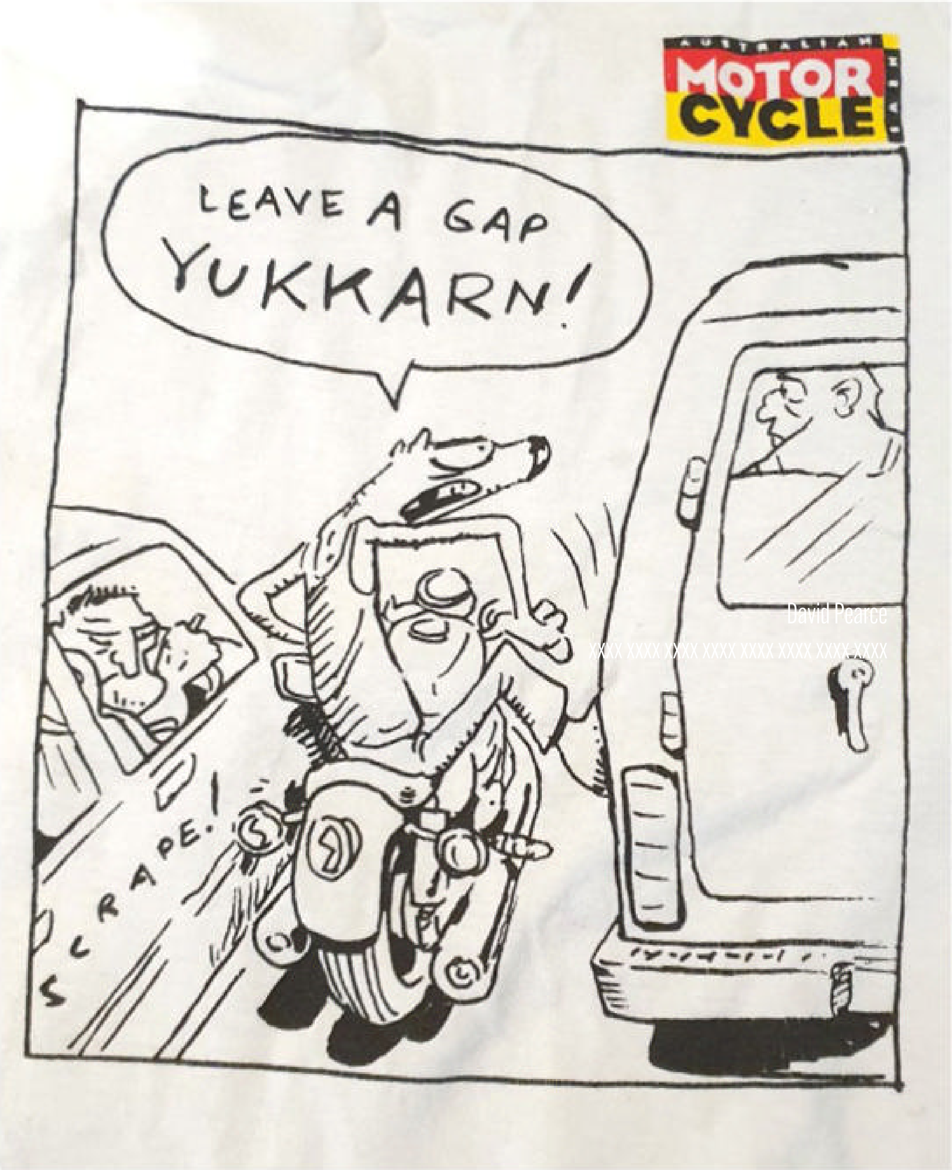

MOTOR CYCLE
LEAVE A GAP YUKKARN!
SCRAPE!
David Pearce

Do it!

I'm with David Foster (AMCN Vol 72 No 17), we need to resurrect the Gassit gear or are we in an age where we could be offending too many these days?

I loved Fred's Sausage Roll (AMCN Vol 72 No 13), it got me searching through the draws to dig out my AMCN T-shirt, which always gets a laugh from my mates who were weaned on Fred.

While you're in resurrection mode, how about you get the Phillip Island Classic happening again and you can sell your Gassit gear from your AMCN stand?

Pity we can't resurrect the Woose as well... he'd have it happening, I'm sure.

Stu Riley
Surrey Hills, Vic

We have received a good number of requests for Gassit Gear and we're looking into suppliers and costs. Standby. Deano

Petty cash

I'm writing regarding the restrictions – no cash accepted and only buy your beer from us at super-high prices – put in place at the recent WorldSBK event at Phillip Island. Cash is a legal currency, but they're forcing the digital trap on people and motorcycling is all about freedoms.

Ten of us had planned to do a road trip taking in the MotoGP later in the year, but we won't be doing that stop now – we'll keep our money to ourselves, giving us the choice and freedom to decide how we control our lives. It's their loss, and I hope it inspires more to do the same.

PS: great mag... if you could only get Paul Sample to do the cartoon on the back page.

Christopher Smith
via email

We'll be sure to mention your cartoon request to Fred. Expect a vist...

MY AMCN T-SHIRT, WHICH ALWAYS GETS A LAUGH FROM MY MATES WHO WERE WEANED ON FRED

Poor form

After a great weekend marshalling for WorldSBK and ASBK at Phillip Island, we were on our way home when approximately 30 kays from Cann River we noticed a motorbike and rider stopped in an unusual spot.

We gave him the thumbs up or down and he signalled down so we stopped to see if we could assist. He had run out of fuel, so no worries, we drove into Cann River to get some fuel and took it back. We waited until he started the bike – a very nice Fireblade – and then went back to town for a coffee.

Soon enough, the rider turned up and we started talking about bikes and things when he said that we were the only people who even bothered to find out if he was okay or not. Not even other bike riders, which my wife and I think is a poor showing – especially in the biking community.

Bruce & Marie Burton
San Remo, NSW

King Clive

Heading south to Tassie from Sydney with six mates, my Suzuki B-King started developing gremlins by the Kiama bends – this was only

CLIVE AND ROGER AGAIN DROPPED EVERYTHING TO ATTEND TO MY BIKE

day one of 10! Devastated, I pulled into Great Southern Motorcycles (GSM) at Nowra and Clive, who is the owner, walked outside to greet me.

After explaining the drama he asked head mechanic Roger to drop tools and help diagnose the issue. Several things were checked and I was on my way to Cann River, but 50km down the road and the gremlins had returned.

Turning back, the new plan was to meet the lads at Geelong the following day after swapping bikes back in Sydney. I decided to stop back at GSM where, again, Clive and Roger dropped everything to attend to my bike. And after spending the best part of three hours in total, had me back on the road and playing catch-up.

Roger's diagnostic skills and Clive's genuine willingness to help has allowed me to complete my Tassie dream. I am very humbled and want to pass on my sincerest gratitude. I am sure my AMCN T-shirt, which always gets a laugh from my mates who were weaned on Fred. I hope you can share my experience.

Ivor Demetlika
Sydney, NSW

Consider it shared, Ivor. And good stuff Clive and Roger. Deano

100 short

I think you'll find in Bike Spotlight (AMCN Vol 72 No 18) that the BMW K 1600 GT's 118kW doesn't equate to 60hp... Also, Hamish Cooper's tokenism in the same issue isn't helping the problem.

Daniel O'Shea
via email

Only 100hp short, eh Daniel? Mav, where is that device (see right)?

Ten horsepower for each K 1600 GT cylinder? Not quite...

Foggy brain

Can you locate the famous Gassit goolie grabber and apply it to the nether regions of whoever wrote the *What a Fog* look back at the 1996 WorldSBK (AMCN Vol 72 No 18)?!

We broke the news that Carl Fogarty would be partnering Aaron Slight in the factory Honda WorldSBK team for 1996 after winning the championship on a Ducati in 1994 and 1995.

"I'm sick of people saying the only reason I won the Superbike World Championship for the past two year was because I rode a Ducati," Fogarty moaned. "The Honda is fast and I aim to prove I'm the best rider in the world by winning on it." Ducati-riding Aussie Troy Corser won the 1996 title, while poor old Foggy never won another championship.

So his 1998 and 1999 titles – which made him Ducati's most successful world Superbike racer ever, with one more title than Troy Bayliss, were just a mirage then?! Mind you, to put his talents in perspective, after a year with Honda in which he only finished fourth, he swapped seats with John Kocinski, who promptly won the 1997 World title on the RC45 that Carl had rejected...

Alan Cathcart
via email

Thanks for pointing out that terrible mistake, Sir Al. We all deserve to be subjected to the Gassit goolie grabber. I think it's still attached to Mav though, and I'm not sure if he wants to give it up. Deano

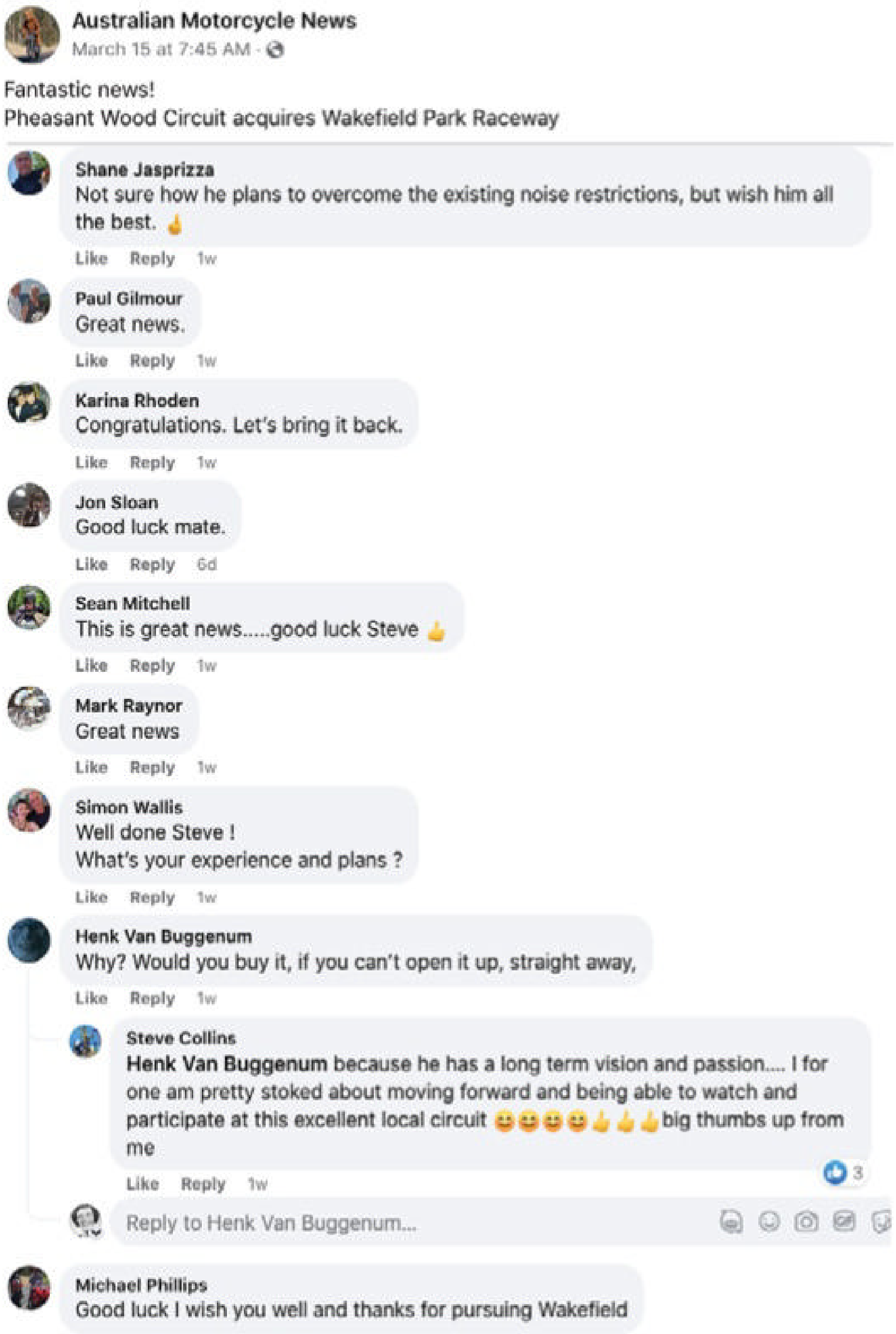
THE KNOW.
THE YEAR WAS...
1995
US DOOR MAT
RIDDEN/ TESTED
COVER
WHAT A FOG
Paul Young
That guy!
PICS OF THE ISSUE

"We were good friends at one stage, but that's definitely changed over the last few years"

SOCIALS. WHAT YOU SAID

FACEBOOK

Post of the issue



Australian Motorcycle News
March 15 at 7:45 AM ·

Fantastic news!
Pheasant Wood Circuit acquires Wakefield Park Raceway

Shane Jasprizza
Not sure how he plans to overcome the existing noise restrictions, but wish him all the best. 👍
Like Reply 1w

Paul Gilmour
Great news.
Like Reply 1w

Karina Rhoden
Congratulations. Let's bring it back.
Like Reply 1w

Jon Sloan
Good luck mate.
Like Reply 6d

Sean Mitchell
This is great news.....good luck Steve 👍
Like Reply 1w

Mark Raynor
Great news
Like Reply 1w

Simon Wallis
Well done Steve !
What's your experience and plans ?
Like Reply 1w

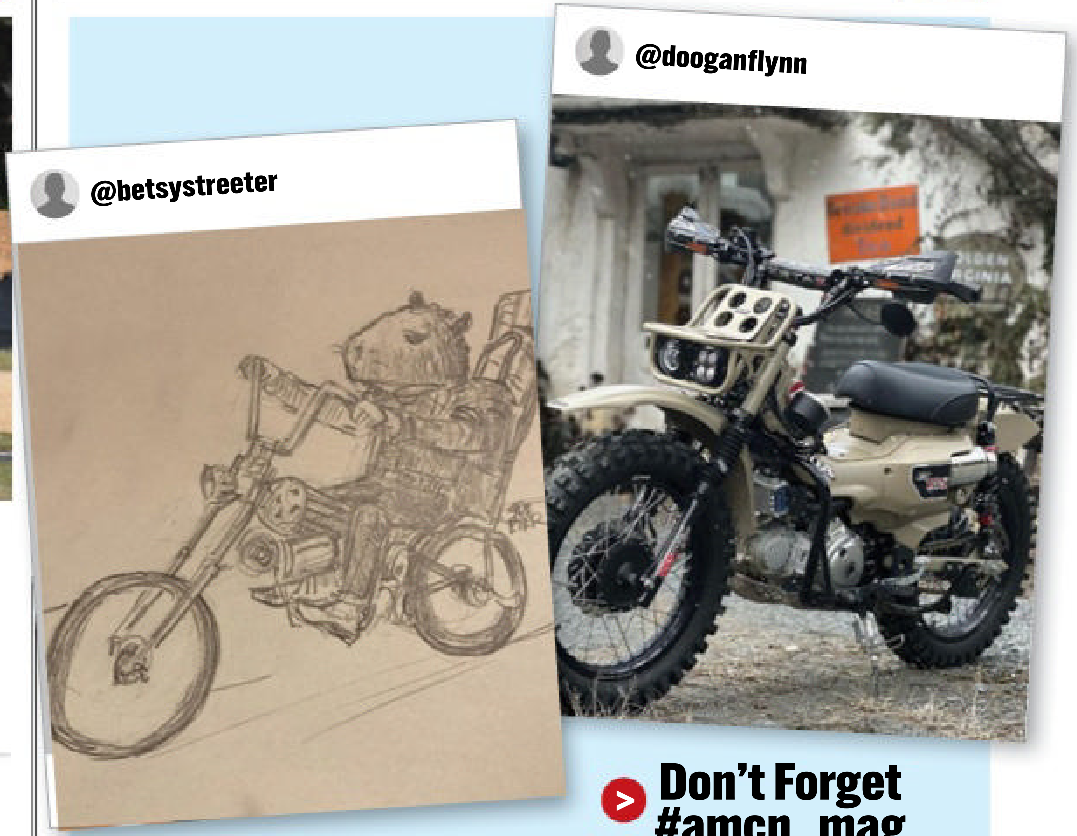
Henk Van Buggenum
Why? Would you buy it, if you can't open it up, straight away,
Like Reply 1w

Steve Collins
Henk Van Buggenum because he has a long term vision and passion.... I for one am pretty stoked about moving forward and being able to watch and participate at this excellent local circuit 😆😆😆😆👍👍👍big thumbs up from me
Like Reply 1w 👍 3

Reply to Henk Van Buggenum...

Michael Phillips
Good luck I wish you well and thanks for pursuing Wakefield

INSTAGRAM



> Don't Forget #amcn_mag

Comment of the Issue

Wayne Cullen has an easy remedy for Jack Miller's unkempt phase.

"It's not that hard Jack, just get it trimmed"

Reaching out

Want to see your pride and joy featured in AMCN?

The only thing we love more than writing about bikes is looking at your bikes. Tag your social pics with @aumotorcyclenews on Facebook or **@amcn_mag on Instagram**, or fire them off in an email to **amcn@amcn.com.au** And don't forget to tell us why you love it.

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Got something funny, new, old or wise to say or share? Do it! Head to www.facebook.com/aumotorcyclenews

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SCAN ME

230113

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

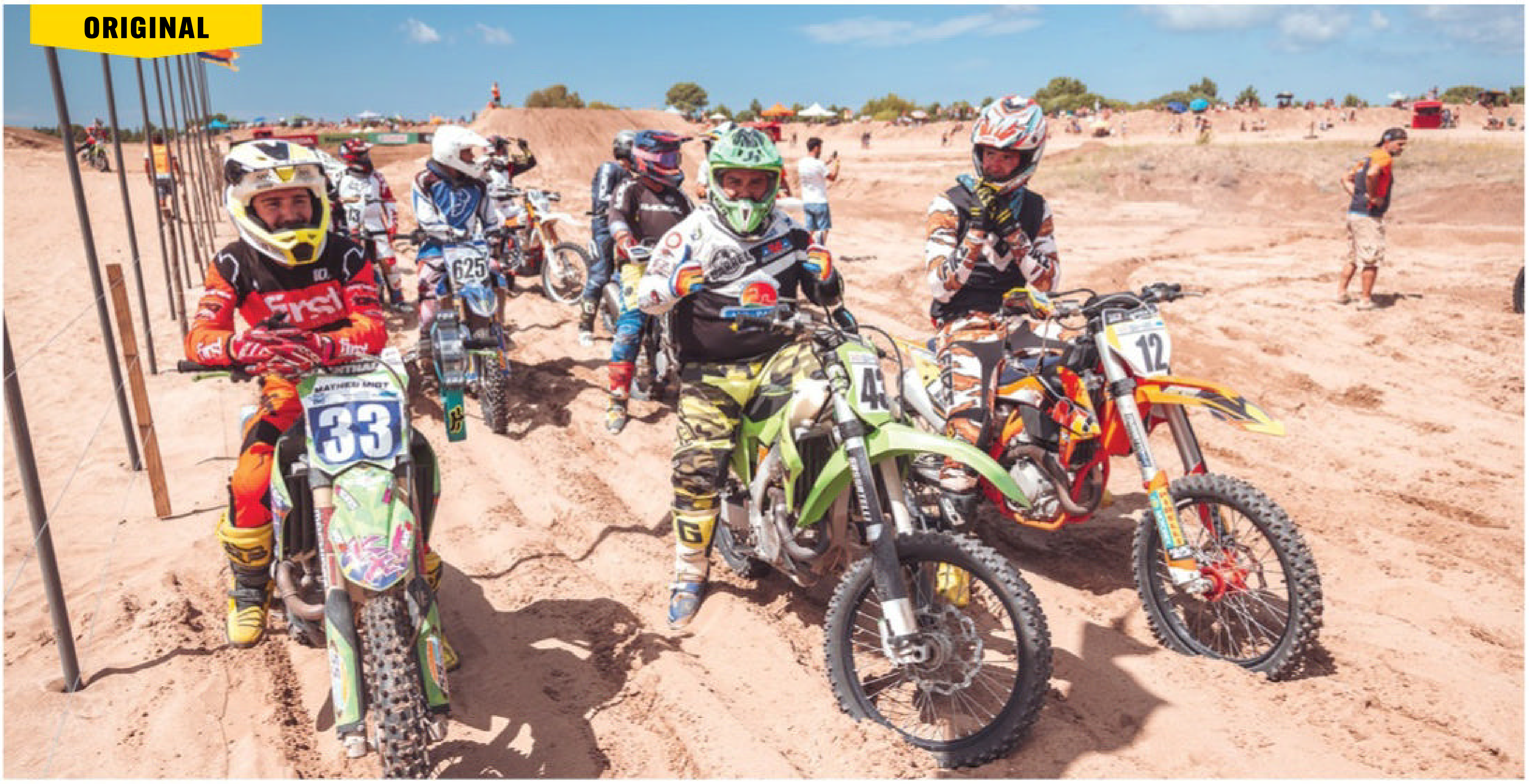
Energy-sapping sand, and lots of it! On the startline for the maiden FIM Sand Races World Cup. Spot the five changes made to this image, email us your answers and you may win an AMCN neck sock!

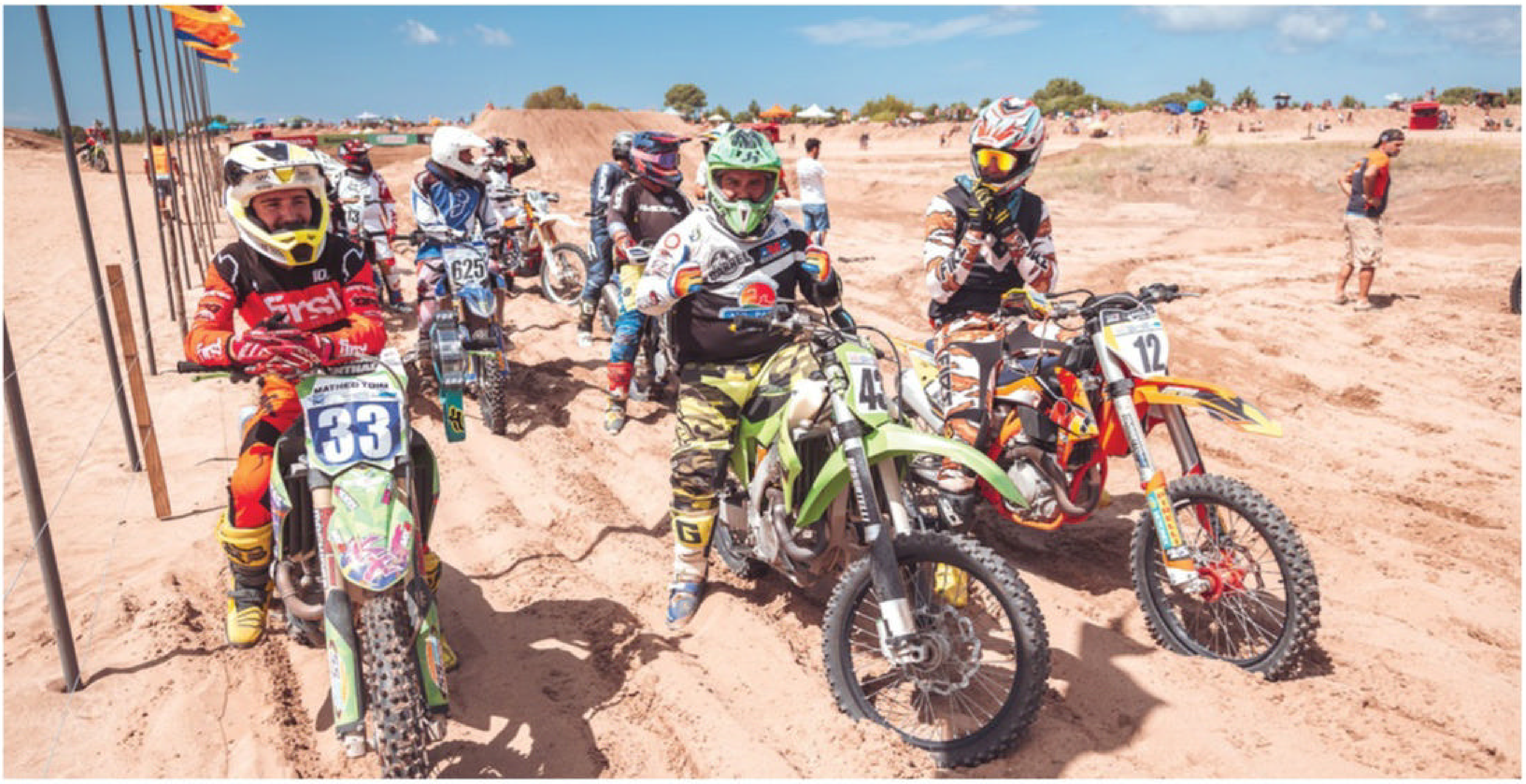
WIN!

AN AMCN NECK SOCK

EMAIL YOUR ANSWERS AND
ADDRESS TO AMCN@AMCN.COM.AU
FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN!

ORIGINAL





ANSWERS WILL BE REVEALED IN THE NEXT ISSUE

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TEST **KEL BUCKLEY**
+ PHOTOGRAPHY **MATTHEW HAYMAN & TOM FASSATI**

SMART MOVER

The TC Max proves electric bikes are now really viable commuters

Quite a few moons ago, I spent a bit of time with Super Soco's first foray into the Australian market, the TS1200R. Akin to a 50cc moped at the time, it had a top speed of about 60km/h and by today's standards was a bit slow off the line. But it met its across-town design brief beautifully and you forgave any of its misgivings for the novelty of what was then new technology.

Now, four years later almost to the day, I'm riding the third iteration of that small-capacity commuter in the TC Max and the technology has improved a lot. Gone is the 2400W hub-driven motor from the rear wheel, in its place a belt final drive from a more conventionally mounted 3900W Bosch motor. It's 28kg heavier than before at 102kg, it's now got a top speed of 95km/h and you no longer need to push off with your foot if you want a decent launch. The specs say there's 180Nm of peak torque, but it doesn't feel like 180Nm ought to feel, nor does the 5kW of peak power feel as paltry – it's hard to compare power and torque figures when petrol engines and electric motors are so vastly different in the way they transfer energy to a motorcycle's rear wheel.

In terms of range, the TS1200R was good for about 75 kays, and the TC Max is good for about 95 kays, both of which is about right for an across-town commuter.

And if you happen to work 60 kays away from home and can't park near a power point to plug the bike into, the battery is removable, so you can carry the 22kg lump into the office and charge it indoors during your work day.

The battery itself is made up of nearly 19,000 lithium-ion cells and is said to be good for a sizeable 1500 charging cycles. Using the fast charger that comes with the bike, you'll get to 80 percent of charge in less than three hours, while that last 20 percent to full battery will add another hour or more to your waiting time.

Charged up and ready to ride, you need to activate the bike via the proximity fob and, once it's tucked away safely in your pocket, press the on button which – not unlike a welcoming Japanese toilet – will play you a sweet little melody welcoming you to the experience.

On the left-hand switchblock you find the horn, high- and low-beam switch and the indicators – though a press-to-cancel system should have been adopted because the left-right-and-back-to-middle affair is fiddly and hard to use. On the right-hand switchblock, you'll find the switchable modes button allowing you to toggle between three power modes. While there's an ever-so slight discernible difference between the acceleration when switching between the three modes, where it's most noticeable is in top speed: 1 allows you to accelerate cleanly up to about 95km/h; 2 reduces that to around 70; while mode 3 won't let you go any faster than about 55-60km/h. And I suspect it's all about preserving battery.

RIDER PROFILE

Name Kel Buckley
Height 164cm
Weight 63kg

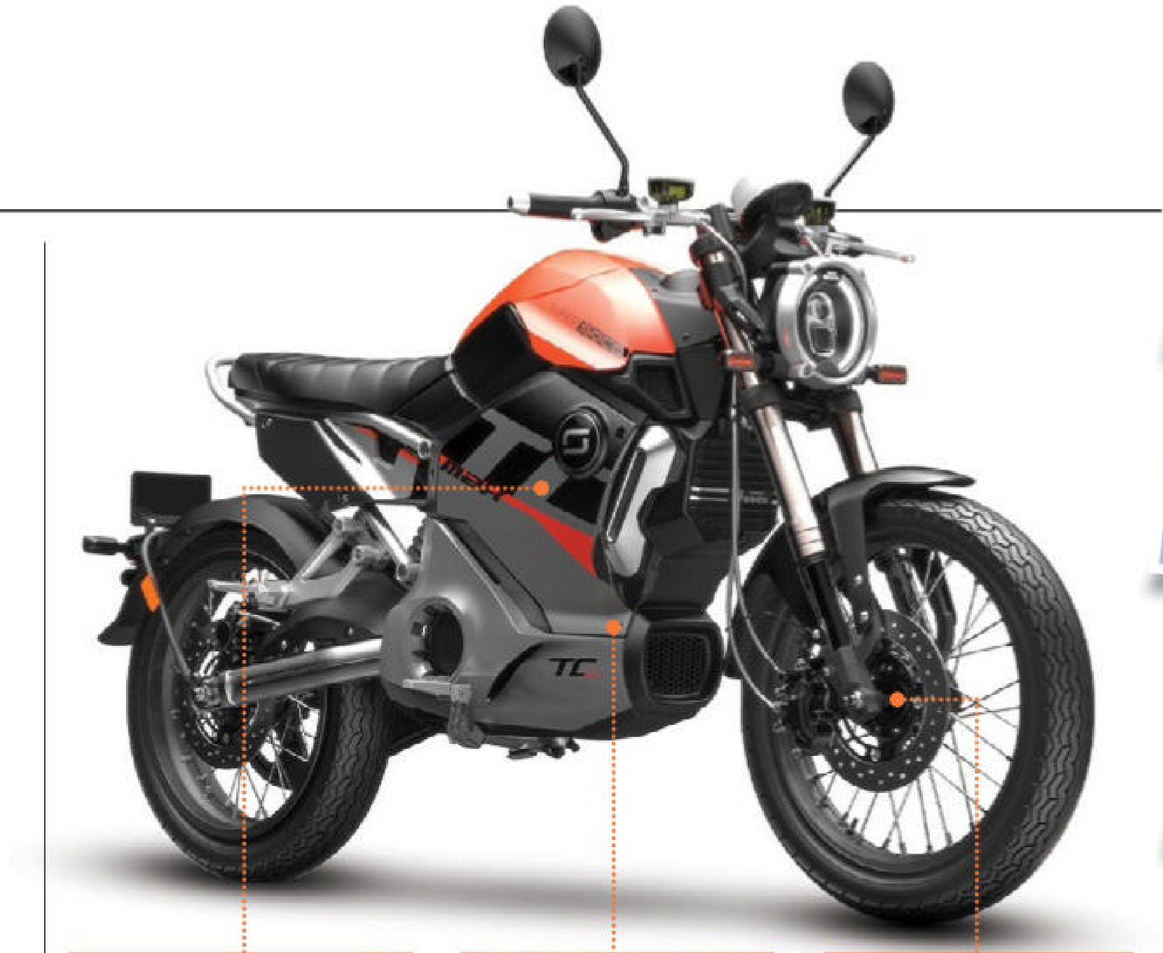
1. The dash is dominated by the analogue speedo

2. It's a stylish little machine, even down to the battery housing

3. LED blinkers

4. The four TC Max accessories: diamond pattern seat, headlight trim, rear rack and windshield

5. Melbourne in all its splendour



There's an intelligent battery management system that monitors voltage, current, temperature and other parameters to ensure it's operating within safe and efficient limits.

The battery is made by NVT, weighs 22kg, has a capacity of 3.24kWh and its 18,650 lithium-ion cells are arranged in both series and parallel configuration.

The combined braking system shares the braking forces evenly between the front and rear which improves both stopping distances and stability.

The ride used five different machines with riders ranging from 55kg through to about 120kg in weight. All riders switched between the different modes during the ride and, after arriving back at Super Soco HQ after doing maybe 45 or so kays of test riding, the percentage of battery remaining ranged from 47 down to 36 across the five machines. Given there's more than 100 percent in weight difference between the heaviest and lightest rider, I reckon 11 percent is pretty impressive in terms of how rider weight effects – or doesn't effect – the battery's range.

Speaking of weight, the non-adjustable upside-down fork feels slightly spongey when bouncing up and down on the bike at a standstill, though the inclusion of a combined braking system which actuates both ends when either is applied means the front-end dive you expect when you yank on the front brake doesn't occur. There's no ABS because the TC Max falls under the same regulations as a 125cc machine – the technology is only a requirement for bikes 250cc or over.

The single circular dash consists of a large analogue speedo taking up two-thirds of the real estate, while the rest of the info is crammed into the small LCD screen in the remaining third. As well as a temperature gauge, a trip/odo readout and mode indicator, the TC Max plays to the range anxious with three different readouts indicating how much juice you have left: there's a kilometres remaining readout, a percentage remaining readout, as well as a 'fuel gauge' type graphic indicating the battery level. A clock would be a practical feature for what's essentially a commuter bike, but one neat feature is the 'dynamic' headlight which adjusts its brightness depending on the ambient light.

The 2019 TS1200R was $4990 (ride away), which is about a year's worth of train tickets, while the latest TC Max is $7990 (ride away) complete with a two-year warranty. If you fancy wire-spoked wheels, add another $300. Three grand is a fair price increase, but the technology (and the world for that matter) has changed a lot in four years.

It's a decent outlay compared to Honda's $2869 (plus on-road costs) CB125E, and about on par with Aprilia's $8140 (ride away) 125cc SR GT scooter – but bear in mind that tyres and brake pads are the only consumables you'll ever need to buy.

It's friendly to the planet, the battery has decent range and the bike has exceptional build quality.

PROS AND CONS

Dash is hard to read, indicators are fiddly, and it could probably do with better tyres.

SPECS

ENGINE
Type 3900W Bosch electric motor
Controller Not given
Cooling Air
Transmission Single speed
Clutch Not applicable
Final drive Belt

BATTERIES
Type Lithium-ion
Capacity 72v/45Ah (3.24kWh)
Recharge time
Wall charge: Full five hours, 80% three hours
DC fast charger: not applicable

PERFORMANCE
Power 5.1kW @ 1rpm (claimed)
Torque 180Nm @ 1rpm (claimed)
Top speed 95km/h (measured)
Range City: 92km, Highway: Not given, Combined: Not given

ELECTRONICS
Type Not given
Rider aids Combined braking system
Rider modes 1, 2 or 3

CHASSIS
Frame material ALS steel/aluminium
Frame layout Cradle
Rake Not given
Trail Not given

SUSPENSION
Super Soco
Front: 35mm USD fork, non adjustable, 120mm travel
Rear: Monoshock, preload adjustable, 110mm travel

WHEELS & BRAKES
Wheels Cast aluminium (or wire-spoked)
Front: 17 x 2.15 Rear: 17 x 3.0
Tyres Cordial
Front: 90/80-17
Rear: 110/70-17
Brakes LEN, combined
Front: Single 240mm disc, twin-piston caliper
Rear: Single 180mm disc, single-piston caliper

DIMENSIONS
Weight 103kg (claimed)
Seat height 770mm
Max width Not given
Ground clearance 189mm
Wheelbase Not given

SERVICE & WARRANTY
First service 500km
Minor: Not given
Major: Not given
Warranty Two years, unlimited km

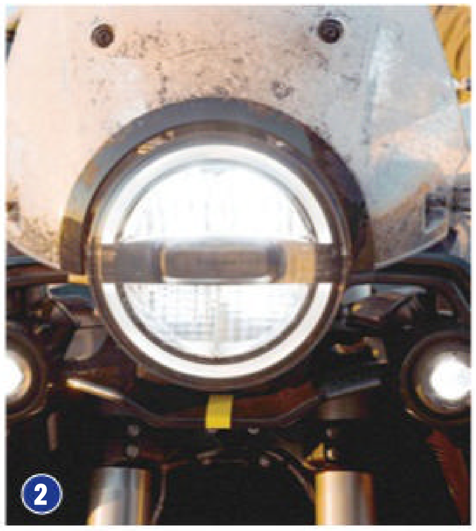
BUSINESS END
Price $7990 (+$300 for wire-spoked wheels)
Colour options Cosmic Grey, Phantom Black, Neon Orange or Electric Yellow
Contact www.supersoco.com.au

WORLD TRAVEL

LAUNCH AGENT

The label says this Norden is ready for an expedition. **Challenge accepted!**

TEST **DAVID WATT** + PHOTOGRAPHY **MARCO CAMPELLI & SEBAS ROMERO**



The latest update to Husqvarna's travel weapon makes a bold statement. Emblazoned on the side of it is the word 'Expedition', and here in Cape Town, South Africa, that's exactly what I'm about to do.

South Africa, with its epic scenery, twisty bitumen roads and off-road terrain that is bliss for enduro-course designers, is the perfect proving ground for an adventure motorcycle. You're hooting along on loose gravel, you turn a corner and suddenly you are in rutted-out sand with rocks thrown in for good measure. Five minutes later you're splashing through deep mud from some overnight rain. It feels like a whole other world and the Norden 901 Expedition thrives in it.

The model is an evolution of the already capable Norden 901, with both bikes to feature in Australian Husqvarna dealerships. So how do you turn an already capable adventure travel rig into an even more capable one? Firstly, you spec up the suspension; the Expedition gets upgraded from WP's Apex to WP's Xplor hardware which boasts a stiffer 48mm fork and boosts suspension travel to 240mm at each end. The Xplor equipment features hydraulic bottom-out circuits to soften the blows when soaking up big hits off the beaten track – and there were plenty of those. It is the same suspension as found in the KTM 890 Adventure R but with softer internal settings aimed at improving comfort.

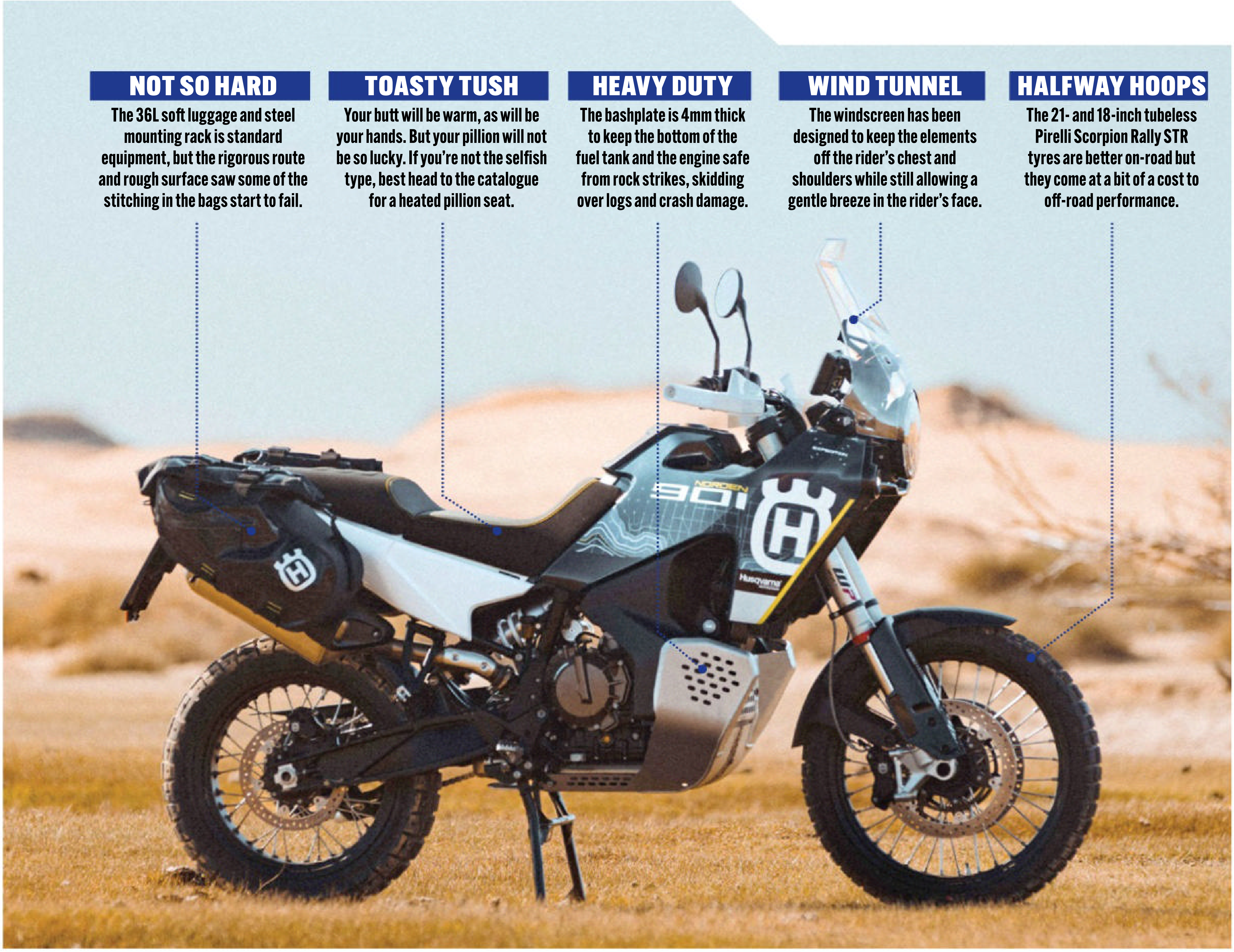
The second thing you do is spec-up the electronics package. The Expedition is fitted with the full suite of electronics including Explorer mode, which is an option on the base model (more on that later). The Expedition gets a heated rider seat and heated grips as standard, as well as full smartphone connectivity and turn-by-turn navigation. But if a standalone GPS is your flavour, there's a mounting bracket above the dash. All of this is standard fitment and requires no subscription or dealer activation.

1. Upgraded WP Xplor suspension, which is stiffer and boosts travel

2. A new, albeit non-adjustable screen for the Expedition

3. Yep, everything you see is standard fitment

4. Five-inch TFT screen, and a mounting bracket if you want to take the standalone navigational route



NOT SO HARD
The 36L soft luggage and steel mounting rack is standard equipment, but the rigorous route and rough surface saw some of the stitching in the bags start to fail.

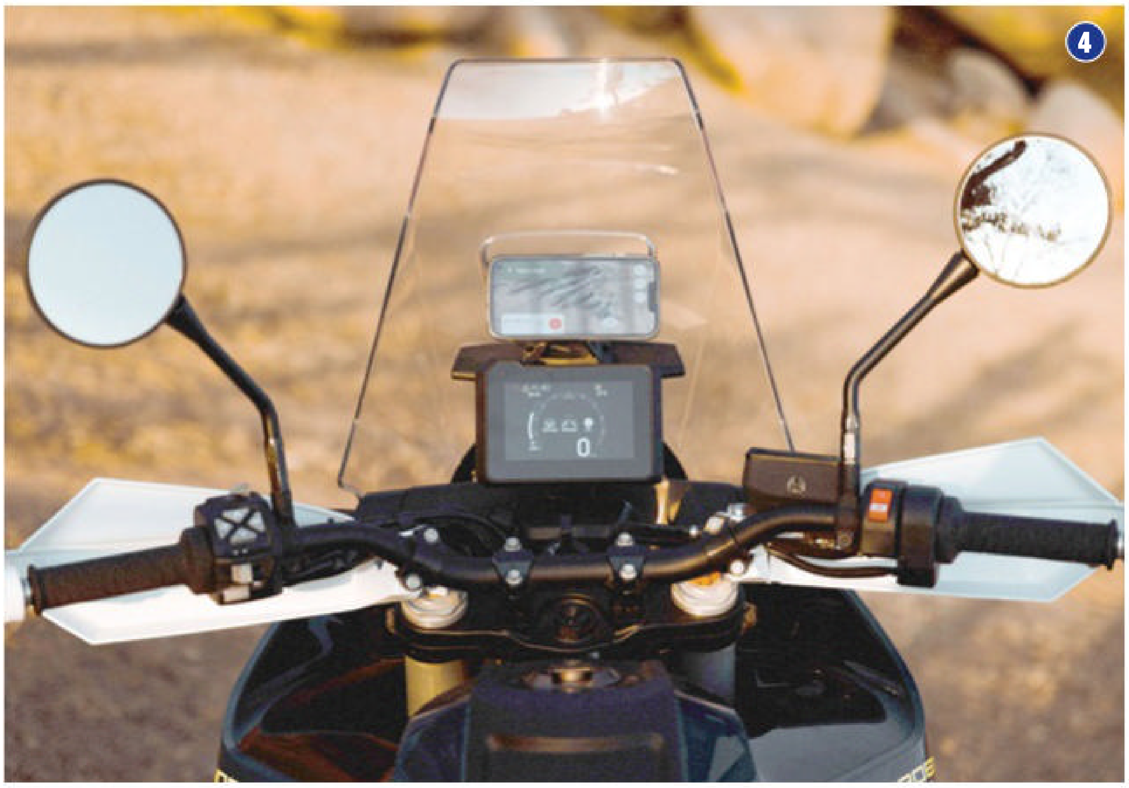
TOASTY TUSH
Your butt will be warm, as will be your hands. But your pillion will not be so lucky. If you're not the selfish type, best head to the catalogue for a heated pillion seat.

HEAVY DUTY
The bashplate is 4mm thick to keep the bottom of the fuel tank and the engine safe from rock strikes, skidding over logs and crash damage.

WIND TUNNEL
The windscreen has been designed to keep the elements off the rider's chest and shoulders while still allowing a gentle breeze in the rider's face.

HALFWAY HOOPS
The 21- and 18-inch tubeless Pirelli Scorpion Rally STR tyres are better on-road but they come at a bit of a cost to off-road performance.

FEELS LIKE A WHOLE OTHER WORLD AND THE NORDEN THRIVES IN IT



Thirdly, it needs to be styled well. The Expedition gets new bodywork which gives it a more stylish and functional look, while a new windscreen continues the theme and keeps the rider protected from the elements. This isn't just any slapped-on screen either: it's had wind tunnel modelling to reduce buffeting while still maintaining gentle airflow around the helmet. The engine doesn't miss out on extra protection either, with the tough-as aluminium bashplate keeping the vital componentry safe.

Bringing up the rear is the standard fitment soft luggage. Straight from the Husqvarna travel parts catalogue, the panniers are mounted to steel racks that stay in place when the bags are removed. Completing the list of Expedition extras is the centrestand for easier loading, maintenance and tyre repairs.

Packing my essentials into the 36-litre soft luggage and readying the bike for a compressed overnight expedition is a five-minute affair. I stuffed my gear into the roomy bags, flipped the rear brake lever over to the high position to accomodate my motocross boots, adjusted the mirrors and I was on the road.

Besides the locals and their driving, there isn't much to get your head around on the Norden.

2
EXPEDITION
901
Husqvarna

Everything is where it should be: the seating position relaxed, the handlebars are high-ish while seated, the five-inch TFT screen is brilliant, and the windscreen is perfect – even if it lacks any adjustment.

On the road, the 901 is surefooted with reasonable ground clearance for pushing the limits of the Pirelli Scorpion Rally STR tyres in the bends. I was pleasantly surprised on the first twisty mountain pass we got to play on. The centrestand is the first thing to touch down in a corner and, when I added some rear preload on the second day, the bike sat higher in the stroke increasing the available lean angle.

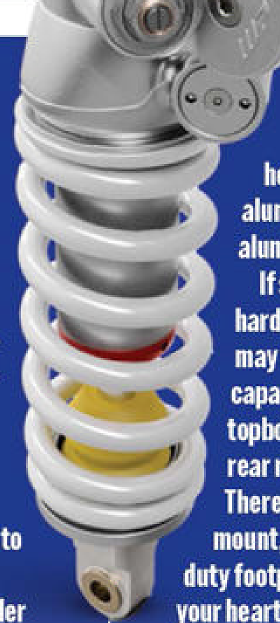
The Expedition tips easily into the bends even with a full fuel load, and actually pulls into the corner more than expected – a few times I found myself on the white line on the inside of the corner. I was able to pick the throttle up early to drive it out and away from the apex and onto the next corner. It certainly turns quite well for an adventure bike.

Husqvarna says it designed the 901 Expedition for 50 percent road riding and 50 percent off-road riding, so bitumen prowess needed to be a major consideration. The Husqvarna-branded brake calipers are by J.Juan and I really couldn't fault them; coming back down the mountain pass I could push the front-end into the corners and trail-brake right into the apex with just two fingers on the lever. They are no WorldSBK-spec Brembos when it comes to power and bite but they do the job well, don't fade when pushed hard and feel super predictable on the road.

The Expedition does take a leaf out the standard Norden's book in the way it absorbs bumps and tricky surfaces. The WP Xplor

NOT ENOUGH EXTRAS?

I almost beg to differ, but Husky has that covered

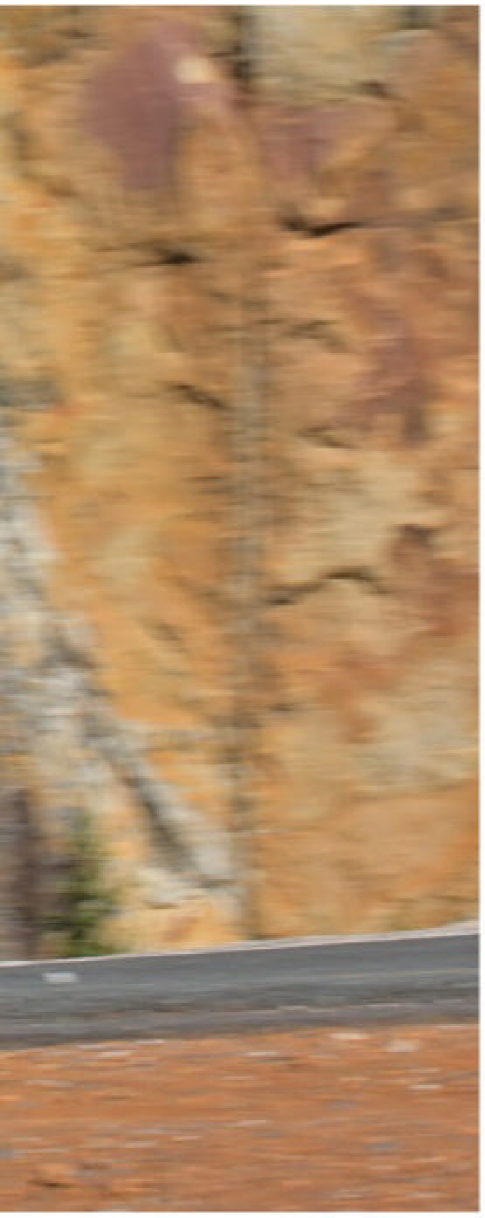


HUSQVARNA'S TECHNICAL accessories catalogue is stacked to the hilt with goodies to bling up your bike or even your riding gear.

One absolute must for a keen adventure rider would be the foam oil filter kit to replace the standard paper filter under the rider's seat. Also, everyone wants a little more tune from their bike so there are also a couple of slip-on exhaust options. If you really want to get hot and heavy with your Norden, you can bling it up with full Dakar-spec heavy-duty anodised wheels, an extra aluminium radiator protector guard and aluminium handguards.

If soft luggage isn't your thing, the rugged hard-aluminium cases made by Touratech may be. They'll increase your luggage capacity up to 56L before even adding a topbox. There is also a soft bag to go on the rear rack to complement the soft panniers. There are phone holders to go on the GPS mount, headlight protection and even heavy-duty footpegs for the hardcore adventurer. If your heart so desires, you can get the full WP Cone Valve fork and Trax shock absorber, too, boosting suspension travel to 270mm at each end.

There is no price on the optional suspension yet, but it was north of $5000 the last time I checked. My biggest concern would be reaching the ground with even longer travel.



I LOVE BEING ABLE TO CLICK UP AND DOWN THE NINE-LEVEL TRACTION CONTROL ON THE FLY

1. Great looking bike, and brilliant terrain too!

2. The Expedition will go on sale alongside the standard Norden 901 in Australia

3. That's 36L of soft luggage as standard fitment

4. The massive bashplate is no shrinking violet

5. Wattie enjoyed a bit of everything…

6. …including extremely cold weather, but the heated seats and grips came in handy

suspension has been lifted from the KTM 890 Adventure R but revalved for added comfort; when the Expedition heads off the bitumen this becomes immediately apparent. The Norden makes corrugated dirt backroads feel like fairy floss – like a cloud, but sweet. In my opinion, maybe a little too comfortable and leading you into a false sense of security because the road conditions feel much better than they really are.

It takes a bit to get used to initially. I eventually added a little bit of damping resistance to the front-end via the tool-free clickers atop the fork to increase the feedback from the bike. I reckon the STR tyres reduce the bike's true capability off-road. The Norden is better than its tyres allow it to be, but to achieve 50-50 on- and off-road capability everything is a compromise.

We pushed the limits of bike and tyre in some very sub-par trails that were washed away, sandy and littered with bowling-ball sized rocks to dodge. Around every corner in South Africa is a new challenge and, just when you think you've made it through the worst, the track deteriorates further or a dog starts chasing you and there's no option but to wind it on to escape – wild dogs are no match for the 899cc powerplant by the way… The 901 Expedition simply keeps coming back for more each time.

The larger 48mm fork does its best work in rocky conditions, resisting deflection through the handlebars and keeping you feeling in control. The steering damper no doubt helps a bit here, too. When the trails get sandy, the 901 does show its size a bit, especially if you are treading carefully. But when up on the 'pegs and in third gear however, sand is no issue. The extra suspension travel and ground clearance does bring with it some other issues, especially if, like me, you wind on about four turns of rear preload to compensate for having an incorrect food-to-exercise ratio. The Expedition's seat is a little taller than the regular Norden, too, at 875mm in the lower setting. Thankfully it is narrower at the front to help dab a foot down when required. The 901s are built for travelling in comfort and that is what you get.

The electronics package is the full deal. I spent most of my time in Explorer mode because, well, we were exploring. Within Explorer mode you can select your own throttle response; Rally being the most precise and aggressive. I love being able to click up and down the nine-level traction control with my left thumb while on the fly. I find the sweet spot is around three, as it lets you hang the rear-end out in the dirt without getting too crazy and the rest of the time it's not intrusive. Road mode does the job on the bitumen, the TC and ABS is super sensitive if there is some grit on the road surface. In the off-road setting you get a bit more freedom with wheelspin but it won't let you hang the rear out much. It will, however, let you do wheelies. There's a Rain mode, too, which reduces power output and gives you even more sensitive traction control. Within each of the modes, you also have a choice of road or off-road ABS. Off-road ABS turns it off to the rear wheel for doing skids and slows down the response on the front, as well as disabling the lean-angle sensor. I also like that you can change modes and settings while on the move, but you just need to close the throttle when prompted to accept the changes you have made. You can even turn off the quickshifter if you so desire.

While there's plenty of new things on the Norden Expedition, there's plenty of things that haven't changed, too. Both models share the same frame and engine package. The 889cc parallel-twin engine is a stressed member of the frame, produces 77kW (103kW) and 100Nm and weighs just 53.4kg without oil. It's a compact unit perfectly suited

1

BOTH MODELS SHARE THE SAME FRAME AND ENGINE PACKAGE

2

3

1. The two Nordens share the same engine and frame

2. Frosty reception

3. Standing tall: the screen eliminates excess buffeting, but also promotes 'gentle airflow'

4. South Africa is adventure bliss

MEETING YOUR HEROES

Hang on, who?!

HUSQVARNA WAS so confident in its creation of the Norden 901 Expedition that once designed and built, it sent it out for the ultimate test with none other than five-time Dakar Rally winner, Frenchman Cyril Despres.

A perfect choice to put such a bike to the test. But he couldn't go on his own and would need someone equally as crazy, if not as fast, so Cyril's professional explorer mate Mike Horn - who'd hardly ridden motorcycles - accepted the challenge. Horn has crossed both the North and South poles on foot and has swum the entire length of the Amazon River. After some minor planning, they set off on an expedition to cross Mongolia diagonally on Norden 901 Expeditions. They crossed rivers, traversed sand dunes covered in snow, and even descended rock cliffs. Head to the Husqvarna Motorcycles youtube channel to check out the feature film.

ROCK-SOLID RIVALS

BMW F 850 GS ADVENTURE
$23,640 (plus on-road costs)

KTM 890 ADVENTURE R
$25,380 (ride away)

DUCATI DESERT X
$24,700 (ride away)

TRIUMPH TIGER 900 RALLY PRO
$24,890 (ride away)

4

SPECS

ENGINE
Capacity 899cc
Type Parallel-twin, DOHC, four valves per cylinder
Bore & stroke 90.7mm x 68.8mm
Compression ratio 13.5:1
Cooling Liquid
Fueling EFI, 46mm Dell'Orto throttle body
Transmission Six-speed
Clutch Wet, multi-plate, power-assist slipper
Final drive Chain

PERFORMANCE
Power 77kW (103hp) @ 8000rpm (claimed)
Torque 100Nm @ 6500rpm (claimed)
Top speed 220km/h (est)
Fuel consumption 4.9L/100km (measured)

ELECTRONICS
Type Bosch
Rider aids Cornering ABS and traction control, slip control, cruise control, quickshifter
Rider modes Road, Sport, Rain, Off-road and Explorer

CHASSIS
Frame material Chromoly steel
Frame type Trellis
Rake 25.8º
Trail 106.9mm
Wheelbase 1529mm

SUSPENSION
Type WP Xplor
Front: 48mm upside-down fork, fully adjustable, 240mm travel
Rear: PDS monoshock, fully adjustable, 240mm travel

WHEELS & BRAKES
Wheels Wire-spoked aluminium
Front: 21 x 2.5 Rear: 18 x 4.5
Tyres Pirelli Scorpion Rally STR
Front: 90/90R21
Rear: 150/70R18
Brakes J.Juan, ABS
Front: Twin 320mm discs, four-piston radial calipers
Rear: Single 260mm disc, twin-piston caliper

DIMENSIONS
Weight 214.5kg (wet, no fuel, claimed)
Seat height 875-895mm
Width Not given
Height Not given
Length Not given
Ground clearance 270mm
Fuel capacity 19L

SERVICING & WARRANTY
Servicing First: 1000km
Minor: 15,000km
Major: 30,000km
Warranty Two years, unlimited kilometres

BUSINESS END
Price $27,840 (ride away)
Colour options Blue/white

CONTACT
www.husqvarna-motorcycles.com/en_au

to adventure riding. Also carried over is the low-hanging 19-ish litre fuel tank. The tank straddles the engine, keeping the bulk of the fuel down low below the rider's knees. There's no doubt this makes the bike feel much lighter to handle and assists in the Norden's excellent behaviour on and off the road.

On the two-day trip my average fuel consumption was 4.9L/100km according to the onboard computer. I spent about 70 percent of the time on dirt tracks, so I feel 400km out of a tank should be achievable on bitumen or gravel roads.

Husqvarna's new Expedition model will be priced at $27,840 (ride away), compared to the standard Norden's $25,050 (ride away) price tag, and it's due in Australia in May this year. Looking at the included extras in the Expedition, it's going to be hard for most potential buyers to overlook its value, especially if they're partial to roads less travelled.

The adjustable suspension, luggage and included electronics make the extra $2800 an absolute bargain – the Expedition is ready for adventure right off the showroom floor.

Has Husqvarna hit the mark with the Expedition model? You bet it has. It has been crafted to fit the void that the standard Norden couldn't quite fill. Adventure travellers around the world want to push the boundaries further and further off the beaten track and the 901 Expedition is up to the task.

THE EXPEDITION HAS BEEN CRAFTED TO FIT THE VOID THE NORDEN COULDN'T QUITE FILL

Ready for action straight off the showroom floor, excellent tech and electronics and comfortable suspension for long rides. 👍

PROS AND CONS

👎 Soft luggage not quite up to the task and the suspension is probably too soft for riders who really want to push the limits.

ADULT SUPERVISION
ALWAYS OPERATE UNDER DIRECT ADULT SUPERVISION
Kawasaki
Let the good times roll
KLX110R
KLX110R L

STOCK AVAILABLE
at Kawasaki stores now!

MINI MOTO MANIA

KLX110R
(AUTOMATIC CLUTCH)

KLX110R L
(MANUAL CLUTCH)

Fun bikes for youngsters and mini-moto enthusiasts. The KLX110R is packed with easy to learn features; automatic clutch, electric start, parental controls and low 680mm seat height. The KLX110R L changes to a manual clutch, longer suspension travel with a taller seat height (730mm) and increased ground clearance (265mm).

ADJUSTABLE THROTTLE LIMITER | 4 SPEED TRANSMISSION
ELECTRIC STARTING | HIGH-TENSILE STEEL BACKBONE FRAME
LONG STROKE SUSPENSION (KLX110R L) | CENTRIFUGAL CLUTCH (KLX110R)

KLX110R | KLX110RL

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www.kawasaki.com.au

WORDS **AMCN TESTERS** + PHOTOGRAPHY **INCITE IMAGES**

NAKED FAN

Imagine taking seven of the most desirable nakedbikes to one of the best touring roads in the country and not a cloud in sight. That ain't no fantasy – it's **AMCN's 2023 Nakedbike Shootout!**

TASY!

ON THE SCENE

With seven of the tastiest nakedbikes on the market lined up for our shootout, we needed an equally tasty test route. And with all the riders Sydney based (or thereabouts) we decided to head north to one of our favourite haunts, one that we hadn't visited for several years: the Oxley Highway between Walcha and Wauchope, inland of NSW's mid-north coast.

The 2019 bushfires decimated this section of the Oxley and, thanks to Covid lockdowns in 2020 and 2021, roadworks to tidy up the mess left behind are only now being completed. Our accommodation would be at the famous Gingers Creek Bush Resort; it too had suffered in the bushfires, but proprietor Gary has been busy upgrading the accommodation which is now better than ever.

Our route took us up the Putty Road, on to Muswellbrook and eventually to Walcha, from where we headed down towards Gingers Creek on the Oxley. Here the highway runs through wide-open country before tightening up dramatically as it drops down from the south-eastern edge of the Northern Tablelands into more forested country. The real fun starts just beyond Gingers Creek, where there are seemingly endless twisties before the landscape once again opens up towards Long Flat.

As well as accommodation, you can get a great feed at Gingers Creek and, importantly, 95 RON fuel. We could nearly have done the whole photoshoot from here, but the lure of corner after corner had us riding down to Long Flat the following day and back up to Gingers Creek for night two, swapping bikes and

THE RIDERS

DEAN 'DEANO' MELLOR

Age 55
Weight 79kg
Height 167cm
Riding experience Deano started riding dirtbikes as a kid and then got into roadbikes in his 20s. He has tested bikes for several publications from the 90s to the noughties and now sits at the AMCN Ed's Desk.

PETE VORST

Age 47
Weight 108kg
Height 186cm
Riding experience PV, aka "The Rainman", seems to have had a change of luck, bringing out the sun whenever there is a motorcycle to test and photograph. He loves wheelies and stoppies, and getting to the airport nice and early.

HUGO KAAG

Age 54
Weight 78kg
Height 183cm
Riding experience Hugo has been riding since he first got his licence in the mid-1980s. He has a thing for green machines and has owned several over the years including a GPz750, GPz900, ZX-9R...

SEAN MOONEY

Age 50
Weight 90kg
Height 188cm
Riding experience Sean has been riding bikes for more than 30 years and has a thing for Euro bikes that started with Laverdas many moons ago. He now has a BMW S 1000 R (among others) but is about to trade it on a Ducati Streetfighter V4 S.

MATTHEW ADAMS

Age 46
Weight 110kg
Height 174cm
Riding experience Matt has been riding bikes for 20 years and in that time he has owned a number of sportsbikes, Harleys and dirtbikes.

KEN MCKENZIE

Age 41
Weight 105kg
Height 185cm
Riding experience Ken has spent the last 25 years bouncing between dirt, adventure, twisty backroads and the occasional trackday. He's handy at building and modding, too.

MARK WATSON

Age 47
Weight 92kg
Height 188cm
Riding experience Watto has been riding and photographing motorcycles for longer than he cares to remember. Always gets the shot... except when Deano pulls a monster wheelie.

THE BIKES

...in alphabetical order

- Aprilia Tuono V4 Factory
- BMW S 1000 R M-Sport
- Ducati Streetfighter V2
- Kawasaki Z H2
- KTM 1290 Super Duke R
- Suzuki GSX-S1000
- Triumph Speed Triple RS

APRILIA
TUONO V4 FACTORY
BMW
S 1000 R M-SPORT
DUCATI
STREETFIGHTER V2
KAWASAKI
Z H2

①

swapping notes the whole time.

On the third day, we headed back down through Long Flat and on to Wauchope for the ride back to Sydney, turning off the Pacific Highway south of Taree and wending our way to the undulating and bloody rough Bucketts Way before heading back down the Putty and home. We had covered 1200km in total over the three-day journey.

While the seven bikes tested are not all direct competitors, they represent a cross section of the nakeds available on the Australian market, ranging in price from less than $18k to more than $33k, and in power from 112kW (150hp) to 147kW (200hp). And why no Yamaha MT-10, you might well ask? There wasn't one available at the time of testing, and neither was our preferred Ducati option, the Streetfighter V4 S.

CAUTION
CRASH ZONE

②

③

1. The loan agreement procludes this kind of behaviour on the Z H2

2. Brekky on the verandah at Gingers Creek Bush Resort…

3. … and there's 95 RON on tap to keep the bikes fed as well

KTM
1290 SUPER DUKE R
SUZUKI
GSX-S1000
TRIUMPH
SPEED TRIPLE RS

$33,330
(ride away)

TEST **PETE VORST**

FOUR FRONT

IF THERE'S ANYTHING THIS BIKE CAN'T DO, WE'RE YET TO FIND IT

Let's get this out of the way: the Aprilia Tuono V4 has the best front-end and sweetest engine of any hypernaked on the market!

I loved the Tuono V4 from the first moment I rode one. It's one of those bikes that has you feeling like you could actually put a motorcycle on the front row of a grid despite a lack of talent. The S 1000 R is much the same, but the Aprilia also has the 65° 1077cc V4 that is one of the sweetest engines to ever be shoehorned into a motorcycle frame.

Figures consist of 129kW (175hp) of power and 121Nm of torque but that doesn't tell the full story. There's mountains of top-end but what makes the Tuono such a good proposition for the road is the low- and midrange grunt which is plentiful. This means you can be lazier with the gearbox than you can be on the inline four-cylinder machines, and it'll still punch out of the corners with venom accompanied by the sweet exhaust note of the V4 – there are not many sounds that can compare with the noise emitted by the Tuono Factory as you blip down through the 'box with the quickshifter.

The Tuono is loaded with an extensive electronics package that is infinitely customisable with three road modes and three race modes, so you can set the engine performance, cornering ABS and traction control – and just about every other parameter – to your liking.

One of the sweetest elements of the Tuono is the Öhlins Smart EC 2.0 semi-active suspension. This you can also customise; however, you can just let the IMU do the work for you and, unless you're heading to the track or your riding style or size is outside of the norm, the system is brilliant and can be left to its own devices. We travelled some roads that were in a disastrous condition and the Öhlins kit was able to sense the conditions accurately and adjust the damping accordingly.

There's a clear difference in suspension and engine performance between the ride modes, and the way the system works it's easy to see why the Tuono has garnered such a following.

Despite the Tuono's awesome engine, high-tech suspension and ability to rail a corner with the greatest of ease, it's also pretty comfortable. The reach to the 'bar is sporty without putting excessive weight on the wrists, and the small fairing and screen allow some protection from the elements. The seat, like most hypernakeds, will start to bite after an hour or so in the saddle, but with the V4 eating away rapidly at the 18.5-litre tank you won't be spending hours in the seat anyway.

Sounds perfect, doesn't it? Well, it's not. The engine likes to blast heat at you relentlessly, the mirrors are only good for looking at your elbows, and the menu functions are about as user friendly as a tine-less fork.

The Tuono has it all where it counts though: fine looks, 'next level' handling, an engine that is versatile and makes sweet music and one of the most advanced electronics packages on the motorcycle planet.

SECOND OPINION

KEN MCKENZIE

THE APRILIA **Tuono V4 Factory looks sharp from any angle. It has a great seat/'peg/'bar ratio, plenty of room to move around and it feels narrow and light (considering its large capacity). I love the clear TFT display, and the whole thing feels quite light under your feet considering it's a large-capacity bike.**

At low speeds the V4 is quiet and doesn't draw any unwanted attention, but get the engine and tyres up to temperature and its alter ego comes alive - it transforms from commuter to fire-breathing monster. Acceleration from 4000rpm and above is impressive, the engine erupting into life, the quickshifter is super smooth and the brakes have so much feel. It offers the perfect combination for twisty roads or long sweeping backroads with an ability to pull hard out of tight low-rpm corners and rev hard when you want it to.

Trackdays with mates would definitely be on the cards on the Tuono, with just a flick over to Race mode and what seems like a million options of Öhlins suspension adjustments, brake bias controls and power output tweaks, allowing you to make the most of all that V4 goodness. When it comes to the perfect all-rounder, the Tuono V4 is about as good as it gets.

Aprilia Performance Ride Control, one of the most comprehensive electronics suites available on a motorcycle today.

The Aprilia's 1077cc V4 has it all, plenty of lowdown and midrange grunt, a killer top-end and it's all accompanied by a beautiful soundtrack.

Standard fitment on the Factory, the Öhlins Smart EC 2.0 semi-active suspension works flawlessly on almost any surface.

1. Brembo brakes and sticky Pirelli Diablo Supercorsa rubber

2. Nice looking dash, but the menu function can tie you in knots

3. There's nary a better feeling in motorcycling than winding that throttle on

4. ...thanks to that thunderous V4 engine

VITAL STATS

CAPACITY AND CONFIGURATION

1077cc V4

POWER/TORQUE

POWER 129kW @ 11,350rpm
TORQUE 121Nm @ 9000rpm

WEIGHT

209kg (wet, claimed)

TYRES FITTED

Pirelli Diablo Supercorsa SP

FUEL

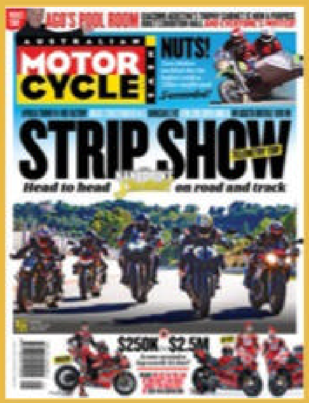
FUEL CAPACITY 18.5L
ECONOMY 7L/100km (measured)
RANGE 264km

SEAT HEIGHT

837mm

FULL TEST

AMCN VOL 70 NO 05



+ TEST **DEAN MELLOR**

MR DO-IT-ALL

THE BMW S 1000 R M-SPORT IS SO REFINED SOME FEEL IT'S LACKING IN CHARACTER, BUT NOT MANY BIKES CAN MATCH IT

3
DYNAMIC
BRAKE
DTC
N

I thought I might be a bit disappointed by the S 1000 R M-Sport after having ridden the ShiftCam-equipped M 1000 R late last year, but after just a few road kays on the 'S' I was astounded at how similar the two bikes feel.

Okay, so the M 1000 R makes a whopping 42kW (56hp) more power than the S 1000 R, but until you get the engine singing above 9000rpm the power delivery is not light years apart. And the S 1000 R still makes impressive power in its own right, its 999cc inline delivering a claimed 121kW (165hp) of power at 11,000rpm and peak torque of 114Nm at 9250rpm.

The figures don't tell the whole story though because the S 1000 R is one of the smoothest and easiest to ride litre-class nakedbikes on the market. With 80Nm of torque available from as low as 3000rpm, you can doddle around town on this thing like a commuter bike. It also has meaty midrange, with a linear power delivery until the tacho hits the 9000rpm mark, where the S 1000 R really gets up and boogies.

The smoothness of the engine and the linear power delivery can make the S 1000 R feel like its lacking in character compared to the more 'aggressive' bikes on test, but as temperatures rose and road surfaces deteriorated it soon became a favourite with just about everyone.

The chassis is so well sorted, and backed up by such effective electronic traction aids that it can make even novice riders look good.

The riding position is comfy on the S 1000 R, with plenty of room to move around and a wide 'bar that makes it easy to flick into corners. It feels light and nimble, and the front-end inspires loads of confidence.

The electronic Marzocchi suspension is fabulous; it senses and adapts to road conditions automatically, and you can quickly and easily adjust the damping characteristics by changing through the ride modes, with a softer set-up in Rain and Road modes and a firmer one in Dynamic and Dynamic Pro. The only other bike to feature electronic suspension on this test was the Aprilia Tuono V4 Factory, and on some of the bumpier sections we encountered the ride quality exhibited by these two was light years ahead of the other bikes.

Other S 1000 R highlights include the powerful Brembo stoppers, the brilliant quickshifter, the clear and bright TFT screen, the intuitive controls with sensibly located switches and click wheel, and the easy-to-use and effective heated grips and cruise control. Some features unique to the M-Sport package as fitted to our testbike included BMW's long life and low maintenance M Endurance drive chain, GPS Lap Trigger for trackday riders, the Akrapovic muffler and carbon-fibre wheels.

As tested, the S 1000 R M-Sport costs around $32,657 ride away, and it comes with a class-leading five-year unlimited kilometre warranty. Sure, it isn't the cheapest bike here but it's also not the most expensive, and it just might be the best all-rounder.

$30,290
(plus on-roads)

SECOND OPINION

SEAN MOONEY

WHEN I was given the job of picking up the S 1000 R M-Sport, I had to laugh. Of all the seven bikes on the comparo, it was the only bike I actually owned. At least no one had to explain any of the controls to me.

I got to ride all the bikes in due course. And all these bikes have a standout feature or two that I love, but I'm hard pressed to name one for the BMW. That's not to say it's a bad bike. It does everything really bloody well, but it seems nothing really stands out.

It was interesting to see people get their heads around what can appear to be a bit of a 'characterless' bike, especially when riding it hard through the twisties. Once they selected the right mode and stayed in lower gears than they initially thought necessary (to keep the revs in the fun zone) the Beemer's performance seduced several riders.

After riding the other motorcycles, I would return to 'my bike', so familiar and comfortable, and be reminded how capable it really is. Super-sharp handling, buckets of power, smooth shifting, comfortable and civilised, and with plenty of tech that keeps you safe, informed and engaged. I think it has to be the most versatile - and perhaps even desirable - bike in this group.

1. The Marzocchi electronic suspension is brilliant in all conditions

2. Not the top shelf Brembos, but still mighty powerful

3. The TFT screen is clear and ultra bright

4. A strong engine, with an ultra-linear power delivery

The 999cc engine is a pussycat and ideally suited to commuting, but the top-end is potent when you want to push on... or if you want to do some trackdays.

Electronic Marzocchi suspension adapts automatically to road conditions and can also be easily tailored via the different ride modes.

The Brembo radial-mounted calipers might not be top-shelf Stylemas, but the S 1000 R has plenty of stopping power and good feel at the lever.

VITAL STATS

CAPACITY AND CONFIGURATION

999cc inline four

POWER/TORQUE

POWER 121kW @ 11,000rpm
TORQUE 114Nm @ 9250rpm

WEIGHT

196kg (wet, claimed)

TYRES FITTED

Pirelli Diablo Rosso Corsa II

FUEL

FUEL CAPACITY 16.5L
ECONOMY 5.9L/100km (measured)
RANGE 279km

SEAT HEIGHT

830mm

FULL TEST

AMCN VOL 72 NO 16

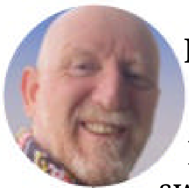
DUCATI DIAVEL
V4
PRICE & SANDERS

$24,200
(ride away)

+ TEST **DEAN MELLOR**

THE ANGRY TWIN

THE DUCATI STREETFIGHTER V2 ISN'T A MILD-MANNERED COMMUTER BUT A BRAWLER THAT WANTS TO BE LET LOOSE



The Ducati Streetfighter V2 might not have been our first choice for this test (we asked for the V4 S) but thanks to its character-laden 955cc Superquadro V-twin engine, straight out of the Panigale V2, it certainly didn't disappoint.

The 90-degree V-twin makes a claimed 112kW (150hp) at 10,750rpm and 101Nm at 9000rpm and, while those claimed performance outputs are well shy of some of the other bikes in this shootout, they are almost a match for the larger capacity four-cylinder Suzuki GSX-S1000.

The Streetfighter is the polar opposite of the BMW S 1000 R, in that the Italian gets all narky, hot and bothered when riding at low speeds or in traffic, whereas the Beemer feels content to poke along and keep its cool. And with the mercury well into the high-30s on Day 3 of our test, being allocated the Ducati at bike-swap time wasn't always celebrated. Having said that, at highway speeds (and above) the V-twin shines; it is so much fun grabbing a handful of throttle when exiting corners and feeling the electronics struggle to keep the front wheel on the ground. Overall gearing is quite short, and the rear Pirelli Diablo Rosso IV rubber has its work cut out for it, but it's aided by a well-sorted cornering TC that intervenes when necessary. There are three ride modes – Wet, Road and Sport – and the difference between them is instantly noticeable, with the former limiting peak power and the latter being the best option when trying to hang on to the back of more powerful bikes. The different modes also alter the response of the traction control, cornering ABS, wheelie control and engine brake control… or for shenanigans you can switch wheelie control and TC off.

You sit atop the Streetfighter rather than in it, with an aggressive lean-forward attitude so your weight is over the front. It's just as well then that the front-end feels so planted, and you can brake super late into corners with total confidence. The front Brembos grip twin 320mm discs up front and there's plenty of feel and power in the system, with the ABS rarely noticeable unless on slippery surfaces.

Even under heavy braking, there was barely any discernible nosedive from the Showa 43mm USD fork, possibly because when we picked up the testbike all the preload and damping settings were wound right up. We had a play around with everything – front and rear – except for the rear preload (there was no C-spanner supplied with the bike) and, while we managed to make it more compliant, the suspension still feels quite firm, especially over crook surfaces. On a racetrack it would be perfect, but on the road a bit more compliance would've been nice.

The Streetfighter V2 is far from perfect, but after living with it for a couple of weeks, and after blatting up and down the Oxley Highway on it, I fell head over heels for it. And at $24,200 ride away, it's also at the lower end of the price scale in this group of eclectic nakeds.

SECOND OPINION
PETE VORST

I DIDN'T enjoy the Ducati as much as the other bikes on this ride even though I really, really wanted to. I wanted to mainly because it's beautiful in an angry streetfighter sort of way, and I still have frightening yet delightful daydreams about its manic V4 sibling.

As a bike the average rider can get the most out of, the V2 is arguably better than its big brother; the power from its 955cc twin is less daunting and it manages its heat a bit better.

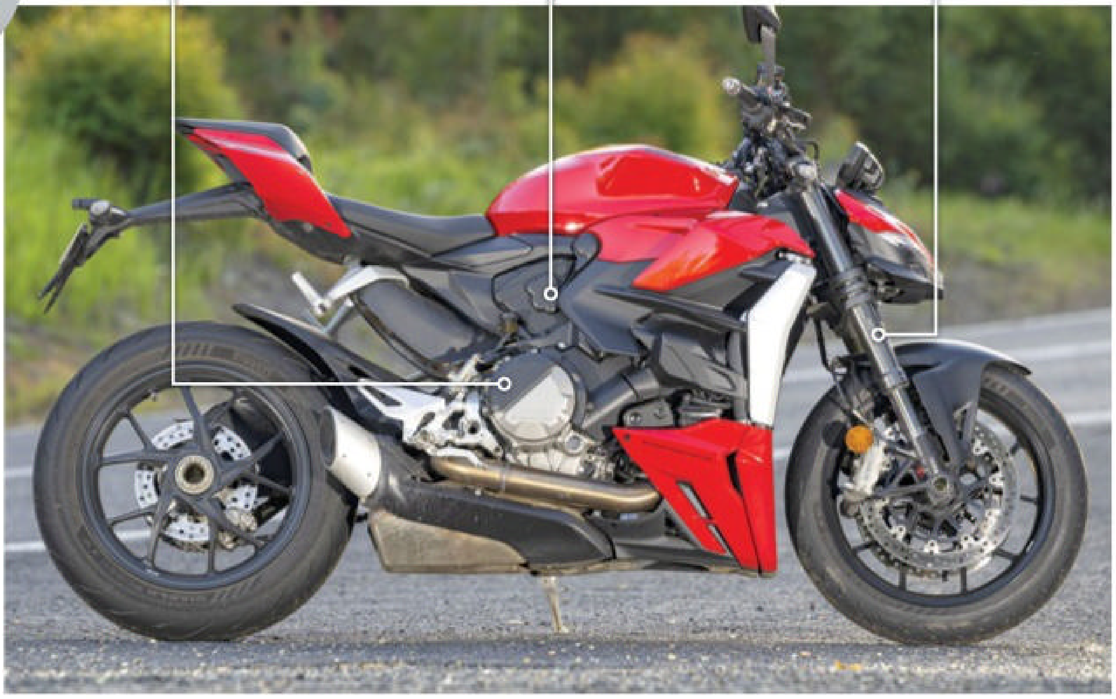
But it is this relative lack of horsepower that left me feeling a bit deflated with the V2. Among the others in the group it felt like it lacked lowdown grunt, and was least happy just cruising along where I could never quite find its happy place where it wasn't either slapping its chain around or feeling like it was revving just a bit too high. But this is a V-twin trait and the KTM suffers from the same affliction.

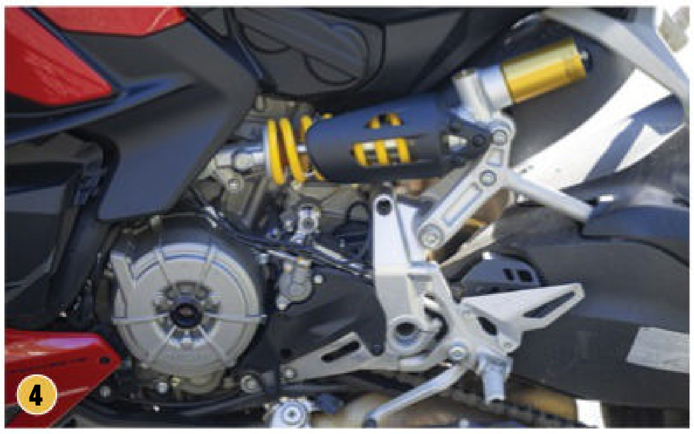
I find the riding position reasonably comfortable for my 186cm frame, but with just a little more weight on my wrists than I'd like. The 4.3-inch TFT is hard to read and the menu system is tricky to navigate. Apart from that I reckon it's hard to fault the Streetfighter – it's just that I know how good its V4 sibling is.

The character-laden 90-degree Superquadro V-twin makes a claimed 112kW at 10,750rpm and 101Nm at 9000rpm. Awesome on the open road but it runs hot in traffic.

The electronics package is loaded: three ride modes, cornering ABS and TC, wheelie control and engine brake control. They all combine perfectly with the flickable chassis.

The Showa fork and Sachs shock are fully adjustable and overall suspension feeling is on the firm side, which is better suited to smooth tracks and roads than NSW's finest goat tracks.





1. Small eyes and massive mirror storks!

2. Engine configuration mode

3. Firmly wedged into place

4. The V-twin isn't a big rap for the slow-speed shenanigans, but shines when the roads open up

VITAL STATS

CAPACITY AND CONFIGURATION
955cc 90º V-twin

POWER/TORQUE
POWER 112kW @ 10,750rpm
TORQUE 101Nm @ 9000rpm

WEIGHT
178kg (dry, claimed)

TYRES FITTED
Pirelli Diablo Rosso IV

FUEL
FUEL CAPACITY 17L
ECONOMY 6L/100km (measured)
RANGE 283km

SEAT HEIGHT
845mm

FULL TEST
AMCN VOL 71 NO 14

BORN AGAIN! BSA GOLD STAR'S INCREDIBLE COMEBACK
MOTOR CYCLE
BRUTE FORCE!
STREETFIGHTER V2
TOBY PRICE

+ TEST **PETE VORST**

IT'S HAMMER TIME

FOR SHEER NAKED GRUNT, YOU REALLY CAN'T GO PAST THE SUPERCHARGED ZED

If brute force is your bag, then there's not much that compares to Kawasaki's supercharged weapon in the hypernaked sector. The 998cc Zed is the most powerful of the bunch, and it's obvious from the moment you crack the throttle. But the Zed isn't just all about sheer grunt, it's the way it puts its 147.1kW (197hp) of power and 137Nm of torque to the ground that makes it an addictive ride.

There's no sudden hit, the delivery starts right down low and punches you in the face until you run out of courage or revs. The delivery is akin to the way an electric bike puts its muscle down – smooth, continuous and brutally moreish. The sound of the supercharger doing its thing is equally addictive.

And I can't tell you how cool the sound of the supercharger is on deceleration – you'll just have to take one for a spin and see for yourself.

The Zed is the heaviest of the group at 239kg, which is both good and bad. It's bad in that more weight means it's more cumbersome in the corners and the Zed has no chance of keeping up with the rest of the bunch – and that's especially true if you're hitting tight corners with little distance between each, where the Zed doesn't get the chance to spool up and take advantage of its power advantage before you're on the stoppers. On the other hand, the combination of relatively heavy weight, a comfy seat and the softest suspension of the bunch makes the Zed a very comfortable roadbike. It also has decent wind protection for a naked so it's the most comfortable at high speed.

It's physically bigger than the others as well, which makes it a good proposition for larger riders. Ground clearance is a problem when you push really hard through corners, but this may well be less of an issue if you setup the suspension to suit your weight and speed. The fully adjustable 43mm KYB USD fork outperforms the preload- and rebound-adjustable shock which, for my 108kg weight at least, is too soft.

Like the rest of the bunch, the Zed is equipped with a set of radial Brembo brakes on the front so you'll never need to worry about stopping power. The TFT dash is full of info and easy to read, and the controls are easy enough to navigate, which is impressive given the depth of the electronics package. The quality of the finish can't be disputed, but it's an odd angular conglomerate of plastic and metal. And whoever decided to paint the frame red should be issued a written warning.

When it comes to all-round sporting performance, the Z is a little out of its league in this group. If you're not a total curve junkie, this won't matter too much and you'll be blown away by the sheer absurdity of its engine. And, at $24,279 (plus on-road costs), I reckon its pretty good buying.

$
$24,279
(plus on-roads)

SECOND OPINION

MATT ADAMS

THE SOUND of its supercharger makes the Kawasaki Z H2 demand attention as you accelerate down the street, and it certainly pumps up the power way beyond any of the other bikes in this test.

Overall, this bike is a comfortable ride. With a sports-touring riding position, it is spacious with a comfortable seat, and the handlebars are situated in a nice position – it's comfortable enough to have as a daily commute or riding long distance on highways and winding roads. On the larger side, this bike is slightly heavy leaning into corners, but once leaned in it corners nicely.

The brakes are very responsive and able to pull the bike up smoothly, while a 19-litre tank is well suited to touring. The bike has a cool, sleek, futuristic front-end design, and was aptly nicknamed 'the jetski' thanks to its undeniable resemblance. The dash display has a lot going on, but it is well planned out and functional, making it easy to view and use. The cruise control is easy to use, too, and is a nice luxury on longer rides.

If sports-touring is your thing, this bike is definitely worth your consideration and, in my view fairly priced for what you get.

4
SUPER CHARGED

1. You'll never have to worry about stopping power...

2. The TFT screen is a cinch to navigate through

3. It doesn't really matter how the exhaust sounds – the supercharger doing its thing is addictive enough!

4. Smooth and brutral power, all the way from the bottom-end

The Z H2 seems to have all the kit it needs to compete in the corners, but its soft KYB suspension and 239kg weight hold it back.

The Z H2's supercharged 998cc engine boasts some big power and torque figures yet delivered in such a beautifully linear way.

With 19 litres fuel capacity, and a relaxed riding position, and plush seat, you could crack out quite a few fast and comfortable miles on the Z.

VITAL STATS

CAPACITY AND CONFIGURATION

Supercharged 998cc inline four

POWER/TORQUE

POWER 147.1kW @ 11,000rpm
TORQUE 137Nm @ 8500rpm

WEIGHT

239kg (kerb, claimed)

TYRES FITTED

Pirelli Diablo Rosso III

FUEL

FUEL CAPACITY 19L
ECONOMY 6.7L/100km (measured)
RANGE 283km

SEAT HEIGHT

830mm

FULL TEST

AMCN VOL 69 NO 20

MOTOR CYCL
AIR-FORCED ONE
SUITED & BOOTED!
HARD QUIZZED

$29,420 (ride away)

TEST **PETE VORST**

ORANGE MIST

LOUD, FAST AND LAIRY. KTM'S SUPERNAKED IS ABOUT AS ATTENTION SEEKING AS MOTORCYCLING GETS

KTM's 1290 Super Duke R is not the most powerful hypernaked on the market, there are bikes that handle better and machines that stop better, too – but I won't even try and hide the fact that I've loved the Super Duke since when I first rode one in 2020.

I haven't had an opportunity to spend any meaningful time with the Super Duke in the last three years, but riding it again was like meeting your favourite musician and not coming away disappoined; I quickly remembered why I loved the KTM so much.

It's not for everyone though, as the mighty V-twin engine isn't refined or sweet. It's angry and hits hard when you open the throttle. It can be snatchy and noisy if you try and accelerate in too high a gear – and the gearing seems to have been developed with German autobahns in mind because even at 110km/h, it feels more comfortable in fifth gear than sixth. But who cares? The KTM isn't about cruising: it's the class clown and wants to be ridden as such.

When it comes to handling, it's right there with most of the rest – perhaps not the BMW or Aprilia, but they are special cases. The thing is, the 1301cc engine is such a brute, so engaging and so much fun you don't really notice how good (or not) the rest of the bike is. It just does what it needs to do without complaint or complication.

The enticing engine performance isn't surprising when you check the spec sheet, with 132kW (180hp) of power on tap and a fat 140Nm of torque available. And that's the KTMs best party trick. You can use the torque to pull massive wheelies, and reel in the opposition out of corners before the power comes into its own – this V-twin is happy revving its freckle off – it's god's gift to hoons, that's for sure!

Where some of the other machines are all business between corners, readying for a precise brake, turn and squirt affair, the scallywag Kato is lifting its front wheel and laying rubber out of corners.

So, if it's such a scallywag does it handle well? My word it does! Does it brake well? Of course, it does. It's loaded with Brembos at both ends.

For my weight the fully adjustable WP suspension is on the money for road use, and you'll only need to fettle with it if you're ripping around tracks or you're a jockey-sized rider. The riding position is aggressive without being uncomfortable and it's a roomy rig, so tall riders should be happy.

I find it hard to fault the KTM really, and that is because it does what I want a bike to do. It thrills; it doesn't have the obscene power of the Kawasaki, and it doesn't handle as well as the other Europeans on test, but it's just so damn fun. And isn't that why we ride?

SECOND OPINION

DEAN MELLOR

WHAT AN absolute beast! Sure, the 1290 Super Duke R might not be the most powerful machine here but it is undoubtedly the torque monster of the group, churning out a dominant 140Nm at 8000rpm, along with a handy 132kW (180hp) of power at 9500rpm. Switch off the TC and the wheelie control, flick it into Sport mode and you really have to be careful with the throttle to keep the front wheel on the deck. In fact, I found the Sport mode to be a bit too aggressive at times, preferring the more sedate (yet still insane) Street mode. Only Rain mode dulls output to a seemingly more 'sensible' level.

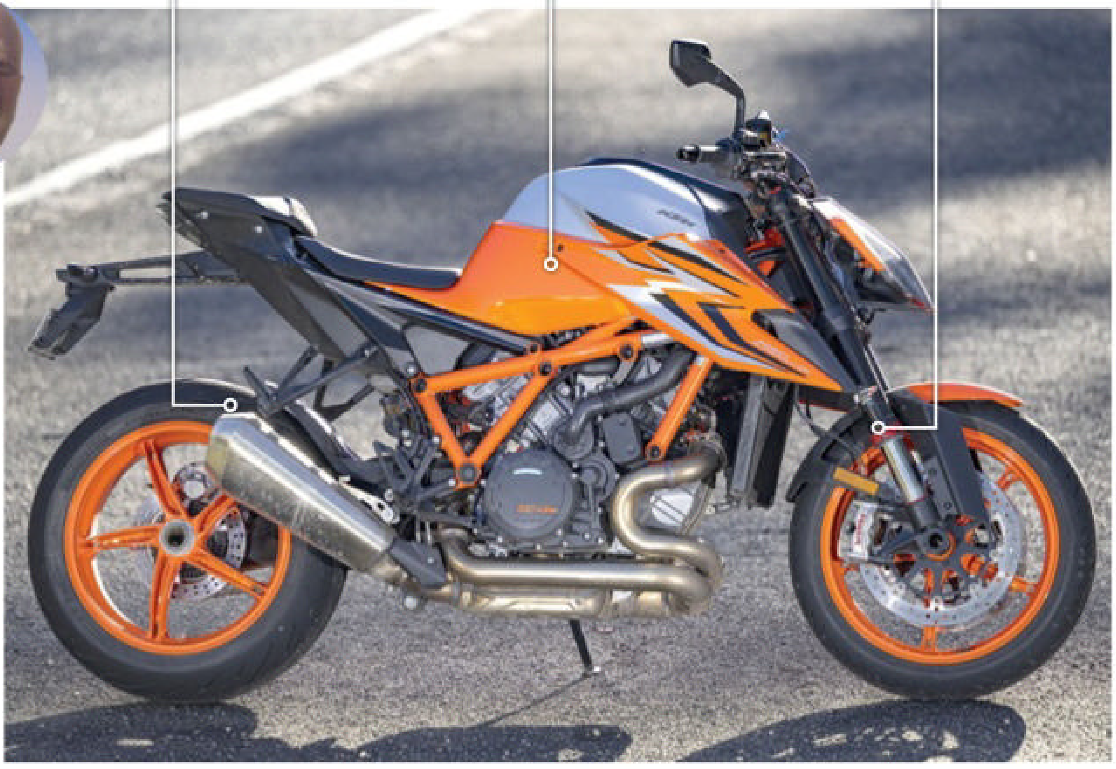
Fortunately, all that grunt is backed up by a state-of-the-art electronics package with cornering ABS and TC, and well-sorted Brembo stoppers and fully adjustable WP suspension. The riding position on the Super Duke is quite aggressive, begging you to get your elbows out and manhandle it through corners; it feels more top-heavy than some of the others, but is easy enough to hoik from side to side and holds a line well once tipped in.

The Super Duke is comfortable enough for long distances, it has a decent pillion seat, the controls are easy to use and the TFT screen is bright, colourful and easy to read. This is a bloody fun bike.

The SD R uses a thin-walled, large-diameter tube trellis frame, combined with a composite subframe to keep weight to a minimum.

With dual position adjustable footpegs and four positions of adjustment for the 'bar, you can customise the comfort level to suit yourself.

As analogue suspension goes, the Super Duke's fully adjustable WP Apex forks are excellent, not that they spend a lot of time near the ground.



1. KTM's signature orange wheels look trick

2. The TFT screen is probably due for a freshen up

3. Just in case you were in any doubt it's a 1290 Super Duke...

4. Massive swingarm to help harness all that power

VITAL STATS

CAPACITY AND CONFIGURATION

1301cc V-twin

POWER/TORQUE

POWER 132kW @ 9500rpm
TORQUE 140Nm @ 8000rpm

WEIGHT

189kg (dry, claimed)

TYRES FITTED

Bridgestone Battlax Hypersport S22

FUEL

FUEL CAPACITY 16L
ECONOMY 6.1L/100km (measured)
RANGE 262km

SEAT HEIGHT

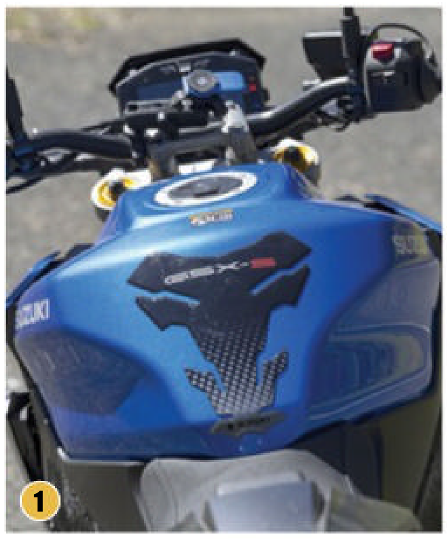
835mm

FULL TEST

AMCN VOL 69 NO 16

FIRST RIDE! KTM'S MENTAL 1290 SUPER DUKE R!
AUSTRALIAN
MOTOR CYCLE
Downforce and digital mastery makes Ducati's V4 S faster and easier to ride!
RISE TO POWER

+ TEST **DEAN MELLOR**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3

CHEAP THRILLS

THE GSX-S1000 IS BY FAR THE MOST AFFORDABLE BIKE HERE, BUT THAT DOESN'T MAKE IT THE LEAST AMOUNT OF FUN

It's hard to understand how much awesomeness Suzuki has managed to pack into such an affordable nakedbike. Sure, the on-paper figures indicate the GSX-S1000 is one of the least powerful machines on test, but it's howling 999cc inline four is a ripper of an engine, feeling more potent than its stated 112kW (150hp) at 11,000rpm and 106Nm at 9250rpm would suggest.

The GSX-S1000 is quite basic compared to some of the more expensive bikes on test, but having said that it still offers a ride-by-wire throttle and three ride modes: A is the one with the touchiest throttle response, B is best suited to everyday riding, and C is doughy enough to be considered a rain setting. Money saving is evident when you look at the basic (non-cornering) ABS and TC systems, but the electronics work well enough on the road and they are backed up by some seriously decent hardware in the form of Brembo brakes with four-piston monobloc calipers gripping 310mm discs up front, offering plenty of stopping power and good feel, and KYB suspension with a fully adjustable 43mm USD fork and rebound- and preload-adjustable rear shock. They offer well-sorted base settings and plenty of scope to tailor to rider and conditions.

With its GSX-R1000-derived chassis and the sticky Dunlop Sportmax Roadsport 2 rubber, the GSX-S1000 is simply brilliant on a twisty road. The front-end feel is phenomenal, allowing you to brake later and later into corners, while you can get on the gas earlier and harder once you get a feel for how well balanced the bike is. The suspension copes well with rough surfaces, too, thanks to decent compliance and well-sorted damping.

Compared to some of the other bikes, the GSX-S1000 feels compact and light, with a natural riding position and comfortable seat that offer all-day comfort, while a 19-litre fuel tank allows for a decent touring range (and at 5.8L/100km the Suzuki was the most frugal bike on test). The low 810mm seat height suits shorter riders, but there were no complaints from the taller riders on test as there's plenty of room to move around on the bike. Weighing in at just 214kg wet, it's easy to manoeuvre at low speeds and, like the BMW S 1000 R, the Suzuki is as well suited to poking around town in traffic as it is blasting along backroads, making it a fantastic all-rounder.

Overall the GSX-S1000 is a good looking bike, but I wasn't exactly smitten with those stacked LED headlights, while the LCD instruments are simply atrocious (you can hardly decipher what is displayed in direct sunlight) – it's odd that Suzuki hasn't fitted the excellent TFT dash from the GSX-S1000 GT variant – but other than that I loved riding this bike. So much fun for such a minimal outlay. And a three-year unlimited kilometre warranty that is only betterd by the BMW's.

$17,990
(ride away)

SECOND OPINION

PETE VORST

I WAS worried about the 'cheap' Suzuki before we headed off on this test. There are some seriously light, powerful and stunning handling bikes in this lot. But when it comes to return on investment the Suzuki is so good, because it goes well, stops great and can keep up with any bike on this test in the tight stuff.

The GSX was an eye-opening experience when I hit the first twisty section on it, eye opening because it's just so damn good at banging through corners. It isn't as good as the much more expensive Europeans on the test but it's not very far off at all. A good rider on a GSX-S will defeat an average rider on any hypernaked as soon as the corners come into view. It handles so well and so easily you barely need a plan of attack – just look through the corner and, voila, you're on the other side.

It's not all good news, though. The dash is unreadable when the sun is shining, the fake carbon bits look poxy and the engine, while still a cracker, is starting to feel a bit long in the tooth.

1. That's what the tank pad looks like – the lads weren't picking at it!

2. Old school LCD dash is difficult to read in direct sunlight

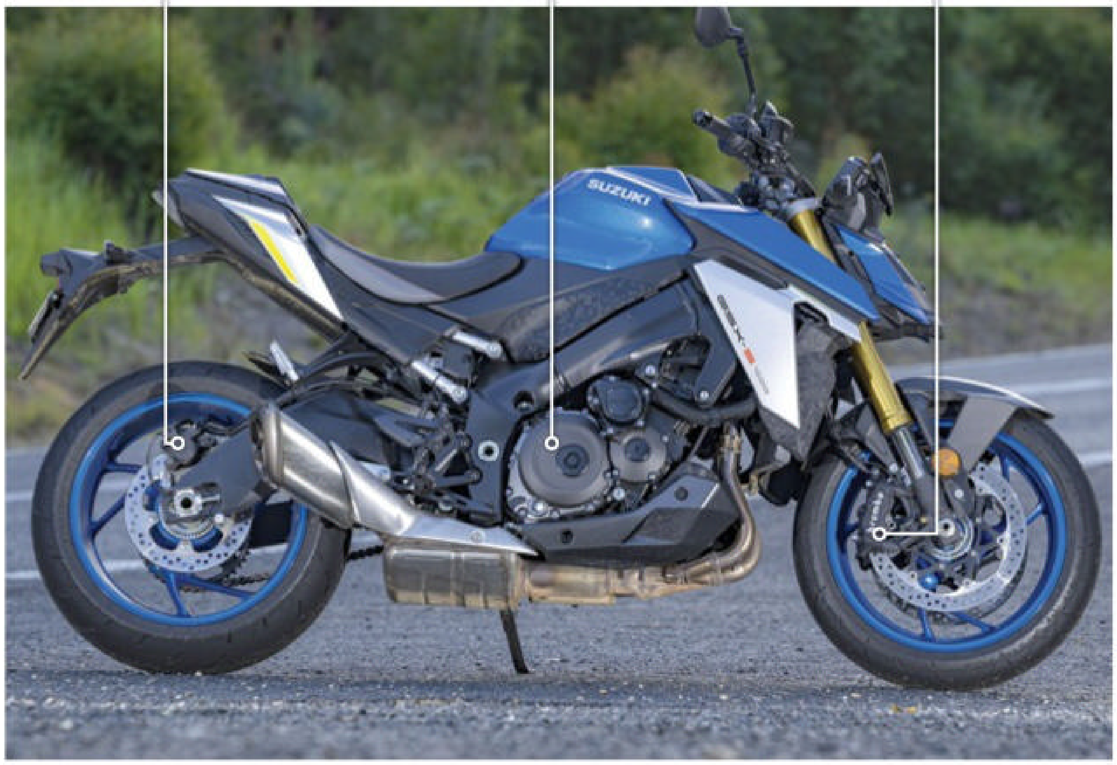
3. The Suzuki has a brilliant chassis, with the stoppers a big part of that

4. The inline-four engine gets top marks for longevity

The electronics package is basic with three selectable ride modes (A, B and C) and non-cornering ABS and TC, but that doesn't seem to detract from the fun factor.

The 999cc inline for makes a decent power and torque, but more importantly it sounds bloody fantastic while doing it thanks to a fabulous induction roar.

It stops and corners as well as it goes thanks to the powerful Brembo braking package, the GSX-R-derived chassis and the well-sorted KYB suspension.



VITAL STATS

CAPACITY AND CONFIGURATION
754cc parallel-twin

POWER/TORQUE
POWER 112kW @ 11,000rpm
TORQUE 106Nm @ 9250rpm

WEIGHT
214kg (kerb, claimed)

TYRES FITTED
Dunlop Sportsmax Roadsport 2

FUEL
FUEL CAPACITY 19L
ECONOMY 5.8L/100km (measured)
RANGE 328km

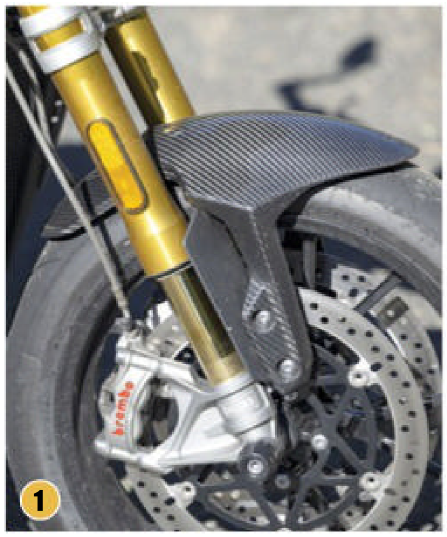
SEAT HEIGHT
810mm

FULL TEST
AMCN VOL 71 NO 17

KTM CAUGHT OUT! 390 ENDURO EXPOSED
MOTOR CYCLE
2022 MOTOGP

$28,990
(ride away)

TEST **PETE VORST**


1

2

3

HINKLEY HURRICANE

THE BRITISH BIKE THAT GETS BETTER AND BETTER THE QUICKER YOU RIDE IT

When I first rode the RS I was a bit nonplussed. It looks cool, the finish and attention to detail is excellent and the engine sounds great but the bike wasn't making me grin like some of the others. Turns out the Speed Triple is one of those bikes that needs to be pushed to really appreciate how good it can be. I'm not the only one of the group to have ridden the RS in MOTY 2021 and came away thinking 'it's okay', but after having had the chance to really push the RS I'm now thinking 'holy hell, that's good'.

The RS looks and feels small and skinny which instils a lot of confidence– it's like being on a wider than average enduro bike. The RS's front-end isn't quite as brilliant as the Aprilia's, isn't as flickable as the two inline fours and is less manic than the KTM – it's baby bear's porridge and has just the right amount of each of those traits to make it a brilliant motorcycle.

The Öhlins suspension is a tad on the hard side when you're just cruising along but perfect when you're wringing its neck, and there's plenty of adjustability so tuning in a smoother ride isn't an issue. This is where the electronic suspension on the Tuono comes into its own, but remember the Aprilia is a solid $4310 more expensive which can buy you a lot of suspension tuning and other trick goodies.

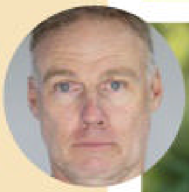
The handling may take a while to really shine, but the 1160cc triple requires no such run up. You can certainly feel and hear when the RS is reaching peak power – it's all induction noise and thrust, but the torque is very progressive. Despite the torque peak at 9000rpm, if you like to chuck wheelies the RS responds best much lower in the rev range.

The RS is a reasonably comfortable mount, but if you're on the taller side of the bell curve the 'bar position can weight the wrists a bit causing some discomfort. The seat can start to bite after a while, too.

Like so many bikes loaded with every electronic gizmo under the sun the menus can take some getting used to, and even things like finding the odometer can be a mission. Thankfully, the TFT dash is bright and clear, and it needs to be because there's a fair amount of information crammed on the screen which can be difficult to read for old eyes.

With a powerful character-filled triple engine, Öhlins suspension, epic handling and brakes, and all the electronic fruit you could wish for, the RS is bloody good buying at $28,990. On top of that it looks angry and oozes quality. My only real issue with the RS is comfort and, on the long haul back home when play time was over, I wasn't enthused about riding it again. But long haul is not what hypernakeds are about: they're about fun and hooliganism and, once you use it properly, the RS has those qualities in spades.

SECOND OPINION
HUGO KAAG



THE TRIUMPH has finally won me over. When I first rode it a few years ago on a cold, damp pock-marked piece of tarmac we just did not gel. I felt the suspension was way too stiff and I was too worried about the semi-slick tyres in slimy conditions and I never felt confident.

However, during this comparo we had better conditions and, with more time in the saddle and fantastic roads, the bike was able to show me the breadth of its abilities. The highlight has to be the engine: awesome power from anywhere in the rev range while sounding fantastic. Fueling was not as smooth as some of the other bikes and felt snatchy at low speed. The suspension is still stiff but improves as the pace quickens, and on smooth roads the package truly comes together.

In touring mode, the seat is narrow and hard and there are limited luggage options. I understand that this is not the prime design brief but some of the other bikes here I felt were better at fulfilling this unavoidable role. Finally, the aesthetics: it looks like a proper nakedbike with minimal fairings and it highlights how Triumph has shoehorned a big engine into a compact chassis.

Road focused, track ready says Triumph. The seat is firm, the riding position sporty, and the rubber ready for race rather than rain.

The aluminium twin spar frame, stiff alloy swingarm, and sporty Öhlins suspension asks you to push hard to really get the best from it.

The Trumpy's 5-inch TFT allows you to connect a phone by Bluetooth which gives you access to Google on-screen navigation, music and more.

1. Epic brakes – which is just about the narrative for all the nakeds on test

2. The Öhlins suspension really comes into its own when the tempo goes up a few notches

3. Angry ant?

4. The inline-triple produces a beautiful induction roar

VITAL STATS

CAPACITY AND CONFIGURATION
1160cc triple

POWER/TORQUE
POWER 132.4kW @ 10,750rpm
TORQUE 125Nm @ 9000rpm

WEIGHT
198kg (wet, claimed)

TYRES FITTED
Metzeler Racetec RR

FUEL
FUEL CAPACITY 15.5L
ECONOMY 6.0L/100km (measured)
RANGE 258km

SEAT HEIGHT
830mm

FULL TEST
AMCN VOL 70 NO 25

ON POLE! WHY ONE EPIC LAP IS CRITICAL IN MOTOGP
MOTORCYCLE
SUPER NAKED
Speed Triple 1200 RS
The lighter, faster, smarter naked can now brawl with the best!
POWER OUTAGE!

THE VERDICT

SEVEN AWESOME NAKEDBIKES BUT ONLY ONE WINNER? WELL, KIND OF, BUT ONLY IF YOU TAKE PURCHASE PRICE OUT OF THE EQUATION

There's not a bad bike in this group, from the budget-friendly Suzuki GSX-S1000 through to the tech-packed but pricier Aprilia Tuono V4 Factory and BMW S 1000 R M-Sport. And due to the vastly different price points, picking a sole winner out of this group would not be doing any of these bikes justice. Having said that, there is still a money-no-object winner, but firstly...

The GSX-S1000 is so much fun thanks to its rip-snorting inline four and its beautifully balanced chassis, with a front-end feel as good as anything here. Sure, it forgoes a few features and some tech, but it's only $17,990 ride away. Astounding!

The Ducati Streetfighter V2 is likewise good value. Its angry V-twin is anything but refined but let loose on the open road it's in its element.

The stonking Kawasaki Z H2 brings more power to the table than anything here, and for a tad over $25k ride away. It is big and heavy though, and rides more like a sports-tourer than a traditional nakedbike.

The Triumph Speed Triple RS's torquey engine is brilliant, as is its flickable chassis. The Öhlins suspension is on the firm side but on smooth roads it delivers impeccible handling.

The BMW S 1000 R M-Sport is the bike that does it all, and feels easy doing it. It can be a mild-mannered commuter or a backroads bahn-stormer, and its electronic suspension package is brilliant.

The KTM 1290 Super Duke R is a torque monster, with an angry V-twin that fires it from corner to corner like a slingshot, electronics struggling to contain it. So, so much fun.

That brings us to the best bike here: the Aprilia Tuono V4 Factory. It is fast, it handles beautifully, it rides superbly, it stops on a dime, it's packed with tech and, most importantly, it's bloody good fun. But at $33k, that's almost two GSX-S1000s!

APRILIA
TUONO V4 FACTORY

ENGINE
Capacity 1077cc
Type Type 65° V4, DOHC, four valves per cylinder
Bore & stroke 81mm x 52.3mm
Compression ratio 13.6:1
Cooling Liquid
Fueling EFI
Transmission Six-speed
Clutch Wet, multi-plate, slipper
Final drive Chain

PERFORMANCE
Power 129kW @ 11,350rpm (claimed)
Torque 121Nm @ 9000rpm (claimed)
Top speed 260km/h (est)
Fuel consumption 7.0L/100km

ELECTRONICS
Type Continental ECU
Rider aids Engine map, engine brake, traction control, wheelie control, launch control, cruise control, pit limiter
Rider modes Road: Tour, Sport and User. Track: Track 1, Track 2, Race

CHASSIS
Frame material Aluminium alloy
Frame type Twin spar
Rake 24.8°
Trail 99.9mm
Wheelbase 1452.4mm

SUSPENSION
Type Öhlins
Front: Smart EC 2.0 43mm USD fork, fully adjustable, 129mm travel
Rear: TTX36 Smart EC 2.0, fully adjustable, 130mm travel

WHEELS & BRAKES
Wheels Cast alloy
Front: 17 x 3.5 Rear: 17 x 6.0
Tyres Pirelli Diablo Supercorsa SP
Front: 120/70ZR17 (58W)
Rear: 200/55ZR17 (78W)
Brakes Brembo, ABS
Front: Twin 320 discs, four-piston M50 calipers
Rear: Single 220mm disc, twin-piston caliper

DIMENSIONS
Weight 209kg (wet, claimed)
Seat height 837mm
Width 810mm
Height 1085mm
Length 2070mm
Ground clearance 129mm
Fuel capacity 18.5L

SERVICING & WARRANTY
Servicing First: 1000km
Minor: 10,000km
Major: 20,000km
Warranty Two years, unlimited kilometres

BUSINESS END
Price $33,330 (ride away)
Colour options Ultra Black or Aprilia Black

CONTACT
www.aprilia.com/au

BMW
S 1000 R M-SPORT

ENGINE
Capacity 999cc
Type Inline-four, four valves per cylinder
Bore & stroke 80mm x 49.7mm
Compression ratio 12.5:1
Cooling Liquid
Fueling EFI
Transmission Six-speed
Clutch Wet, multi-plate, slipper
Final drive Chain

PERFORMANCE
Power 121kW @ 11,000rpm (claimed)
Torque 114Nm @ 9250rpm (claimed)
Top speed 280km/h (est)
Fuel consumption 5.9L/100km

ELECTRONICS
Type BMW ECU/Bosch
Rider aids ABS pro, dynamic traction control, race ABS, gear shift assist pro, dynamic engine brake control, cruise control, hill start control pro, headlight pro, TPMS, dynamic damping control, heated grips, GPS-laptrigger, wheelie control, engine drag torque control, launch control, pitlane limiter
Rider modes Rain, Road, Dynamic and Dynamic Pro

CHASSIS
Frame material Aluminium alloy
Frame type Bridge
Rake 24°
Trail 93.6mm
Wheelbase 1450mm

SUSPENSION
Type Marzocchi
Front: 45mm USD fork, DDC, 120mm travel
Rear: Monoshock, DDC, 117mm travel

WHEELS & BRAKES
Wheels Forged
Front: 17 x 3.5 Rear: 17 x 6.0
Tyres Pirelli Diablo Rosso Corsa II
Front: 120/70ZR17 (58W)
Rear: 200/55ZR17 (78W)
Brakes Brembo, ABS
Front: Twin 320mm discs, four-piston calipers
Rear: Single 220mm disc, single-piston caliper

DIMENSIONS
Weight 196kg (wet, claimed)
Seat height 830mm
Width 812mm
Height 1115mm
Length 2090mm
Ground clearance Not given
Fuel capacity 16.5L

SERVICING & WARRANTY
Servicing First: 1000km
Minor: 10,000km
Major: 30,000km
Warranty Five years, unlimited kilometres

BUSINESS END
Price $30,290 (plus on roads)
Colour options Light White/M Motorsport

CONTACT
www.bmw-motorrad.com.au

DUCATI
STREETFIGHTER V2

ENGINE
Capacity 955cc
Type 90º V-twin, four valves per cylinder
Bore & stroke 100 x 60.8mm
Compression ratio 12.5:1
Cooling Liquid
Fueling EFI
Transmission Six-speed
Clutch Wet, multi-plate, slipper
Final drive Chain

PERFORMANCE
Power 112.3kW @ 10,750rpm (claimed)
Torque 101Nm @ 9000rpm (claimed)
Top speed 260km/h (est)
Fuel consumption 6.0L/100km

ELECTRONICS
Type Not given
Rider aids Cornering ABS and traction control, wheelie control and engine brake control
Rider modes Sport, Road and Wet

CHASSIS
Frame material Aluminium
Frame type Monocoque
Rake 24º
Trail 94mm
Wheelbase 1465mm

SUSPENSION
Type Showa/Sachs
Front: 43mm USD fork, fully-adjustable, 120mm travel
Rear: Monoshock, fully-adjustable, 130mm travell

WHEELS & BRAKES
Wheels Alloy
Front: 17 x 3.5 Rear: 17 x 5.5
Tyres Pirelli Diablo Rosso IV
Front: 120/70ZR17 (58W)
Rear: 180/60ZR17 (75W)
Brakes Brembo, ABS
Front: Twin 320mm disc, four-piston M4.32 caliper
Rear: Single 245mm disc, single-piston caliper

DIMENSIONS
Weight 178kg (dry, claimed)
Seat height 845mm
Width 890mm
Height 1137mm
Length 2092mm
Ground clearance 139mm
Fuel capacity 17L

SERVICING & WARRANTY
Servicing First: 1000km
Minor: 12,000km
Major: 24,000km
Warranty Two years, unlimited kilometres

BUSINESS END
Price $24,200 (ride away)
Colour options Ducati Red or Storm Green

CONTACT
www.ducati.com/au

KAWASAKI
NINJA H2

ENGINE
Capacity 998cc
Type Supercharged inline-four, four valves per cylinder
Bore & stroke 76mm x 55mm
Compression ratio 11.2:1
Cooling Liquid
Fueling EFI
Transmission Six-speed
Clutch Wet, multi-plate, slipper
Final drive Chain

PERFORMANCE
Power 147.1kW @ 11,000rpm (claimed)
Torque 137Nm @ 8500rpm (claimed)
Top speed 280km/h (est)
Fuel consumption 6.7L/100km (measured)

ELECTRONICS
Type Mitsubishi ECU/Bosch
Rider aids Cornering ABS, cornering traction control, launch control, cruise control
Rider modes Track, Sport, Rain, Rider

CHASSIS
Frame material Steel
Frame type Trellis
Rake 24.9º
Trail 104mm
Wheelbase 1455mm

SUSPENSION
Type KYB
Front: 43mm USD fork, fully adjustable, 120mm travel
Rear: Monoshock, adjustable preload and rebound, 134mm travel

WHEELS & BRAKES
Wheels Cast aluminium
Front: 17 x 3.5 Rear: 17 x 6.0
Tyres Pirelli Diablo Rosso III
Front: 120/70ZR17 (58W)
Rear: 190/55ZR17 (75W)
Brakes Brembo/Nissin, ABS
Front: Twin 320mm discs, four-piston M4.32 calipers
Rear: Single 260mm disc, single-piston caliper

DIMENSIONS
Weight 239kg (wet, claimed)
Seat height 830mm
Width 810mm
Height 1130mm
Length 2085mm
Ground clearance 140mm
Fuel capacity 19L

SERVICING & WARRANTY
Servicing First: 1000km
Minor: 12,000km
Major: 24,000km
Warranty Two years, unlimited kilometres

BUSINESS END
Price $24,279 (plus on-roads)
Colour options Metallic Phantom Silver/ Metallic Carbon Gray

CONTACT
www.kawasaki.com.au

KTM
1290 SUPER DUKE R

ENGINE
Capacity 1301cc
Type 90º V-twin, four valves per cylinder
Bore & stroke 108mm x 71mm
Compression ratio 13.5:1
Cooling Liquid
Fueling EFI
Transmission Six-speed
Clutch Wet, multi-plate, slipper
Final drive Chain

PERFORMANCE
Power 132kW @ 9500 rpm (claimed)
Torque 140Nm @ 8000 rpm (claimed)
Top speed 270km/h (est)
Fuel consumption 6.1L/100km

ELECTRONICS
Type Bosch
Rider aids Cornering and supermoto ABS, cornering traction control, wheelie control, motor slip regulation, tyre pressure monitoring, cruise control
Rider modes Sport, Street, Rain

CHASSIS
Frame material Steel
Frame type Trellis
Rake 25.2º
Trail 106mm
Wheelbase 1497mm

SUSPENSION
Type WP
Front: 48mm USD fork, fully adjustable, 125mm travel
Rear: Monoshock, fully adjustable, 140mm travel

WHEELS & BRAKES
Wheels Aluminium
Front: 17 x 3.5 Rear: 17 x 6.0
Tyres Bridgestone Battlax Hypersport S22
Front: 120/70ZR17 (58W)
Rear: 200/55ZR17 (78W)
Brakes Brembo, ABS
Front: Twin 320mm discs, four-piston Stylema calipers
Rear: Single 240mm disc, twin-piston caliper

DIMENSIONS
Weight 189kg (dry, claimed)
Seat height 835mm
Width Not given
Height Not given
Length Not given
Ground clearance 160mm
Fuel capacity 16L

SERVICING & WARRANTY
Servicing First: 1000km
Minor: 15,000km
Major: 30,000km
Warranty Two years, unlimited kilometres

BUSINESS END
Price $29,420 (ride away)
Colour options Orange or Black

CONTACT
www.ktm.com/en-au

SUZUKI
GSX-S1000

ENGINE
Capacity 999cc
Type Inline-four, four valves per cylinder
Bore & stroke 73.4mm x 59mm
Compression ratio 12.2:1
Cooling Liquid
Fueling EFI
Transmission Six-speed
Clutch Wet, multi-plate, slipper
Final drive Chain

PERFORMANCE
Power 112kW @ 11,000rpm (claimed)
Torque 106Nm @ 9250rpm (claimed)
Top speed 270km/h (est)
Fuel consumption 5.8L/100km

ELECTRONICS
Type Not given
Rider aids Traction control, ABS
Rider modes Active, Basic and Comfort

CHASSIS
Frame material Aluminium
Frame type Twin spar
Rake 25º
Trail 100mm
Wheelbase 1460mm

SUSPENSION
Type KYB
Front: 43mm USD fork, fully adjustable, 120mm travel
Rear: Monoshock, adjustable rebound and preload, 130mm travel

WHEELS & BRAKES
Wheels Alloy
Front: 17 x 3.5 Rear: 17 x 6.0
Tyres Dunlop Sportsmax Roadsport 2
Front: 120/70ZR17 (58W)
Rear: 190/50ZR17 (73W)
Brakes Brembo/Nissin, ABS
Front: Twin 310mm discs, four-piston calipers
Rear: Single 220mm disc, single-piston caliper

DIMENSIONS
Weight 214kg (wet, claimed)
Seat height 810mm
Width 810mm
Height 1080mm
Length 2115mm
Ground clearance 140mm
Fuel capacity 19L

SERVICING & WARRANTY
Servicing First: 1000km
Minor: 12,000km
Major: 24,000km
Warranty Three years, unlimited kilometres

BUSINESS END
Price $17,990 (ride away)
Colour options Glass Sparkle Black, Metallic Triton Blue or Glass Matt Mechanical Grey

CONTACT
www.suzukimotorcycles.com.au

TRIUMPH
SPEED TRIPLE RS

ENGINE
Capacity 1160cc
Type Inline triple, DOHC, four valves per cylinder
Bore & stroke 90mm x 60.8mm
Compression ratio 13.2:1
Cooling Liquid
Fueling EFI
Transmission Six-speed
Clutch Wet, multi-plate, slipper
Final drive Chain

PERFORMANCE
Power 132.4kW @ 10,750rpm (claimed)
Torque 125Nm @ 9000rpm (claimed)
Top speed 260km/h (est)
Fuel consumption 6.0L/100km

ELECTRONICS
Type Not given
Rider aids Cornering ABS and traction control, two-way quickshifter, wheelie control, cruise control
Rider modes Rain, Road, Sport, Track and Rider

CHASSIS
Frame material Aluminium
Frame type Twin spar
Rake 23.9º
Trail 104.7mm
Wheelbase 1445mm

SUSPENSION
Type Öhlins
Front: 43mm USD NIX30 fork, fully adjustable, 120mm travel
Rear: TTX36 twin-tube monoshock, fully adjustable, 120mm travel

WHEELS & BRAKES
Wheels Cast aluminium
Front: 17 x 3.5 Rear: 17 x 6.0
Tyres Metzeler Racetec RR
Front: 120/70ZR17 (58W)
Rear: 190/55ZR17 (75)
Brakes Brembo, ABS
Front: Twin 320mm discs, four-piston Stylema calipers
Rear: Single 220mm disc, twin-piston caliper

DIMENSIONS
Weight 198kg (wet, claimed)
Seat height 830mm
Width 792mm
Height 1089mm
Length 2090mm
Ground clearance Not given
Fuel capacity 15.5L

SERVICING & WARRANTY
Servicing
First: 1000km
Minor: 16,000km
Major: 32,000km
Warranty Two years, unlimited kilometres

BUSINESS END
Price $28,990 (ride away)
Colour options Sapphire Black, Matt Silver Ice or Matt Baja Orange

CONTACT
www.triumphmotorcycles.com.au

"ALL THE ELECTRIC START-UPS ARE COMPLETELY NON-VIABLE"

Outspoken, unflappable and wildly successful. We sit down for a yarn with the most significant bloke in the European motorcycle industry

INTERVIEW **ALAN CATHCART** +
PHOTOGRAPHY **EMANUEL TSCHANN**

As the pandemic gradually disappears, in its aftermath the global motorcycle industry continues to experience rapid growth. Leading this charge among European companies is the KTM Group, whose parent company Pierer Mobility finished 2022 on a continued high after a 12th successive record year which saw sales of its three current brands KTM, Husqvarna and GasGas, continue spiralling upwards to 375,452 motorcycles, an increase of 13 percent. Of those, 268,575 carried the KTM badge, 75,266 were Husqvarnas and 31,651 GasGas motorcycles were sold. Add to that the 118,465 bicycles and e-bikes sold in the same period (up 15 percent), and the company's overall revenue increased to €2.437 billion ($A3.898b), up 19 percent year-on-year. This resulted in an EBIT (earnings before interest and taxes) gross profit of €235 million ($A375m), a massive 22 percent increase over one year ago. That meant its president and CEO, 66-year-old Stefan Pierer, celebrated the 30th anniversary of taking control of a bankrupt KTM in 1992 by consolidating his place as the most significant figure in the European motorcycle industry. It's time for a chat. →

Impressive results, Stefan. Could it have been even better if not for problems with supply?

Yes, we lost 15,000 units owing to Bosch reducing the supply of all orders by 30 percent. Otherwise we might have ended up with a 35 percent sales increase. There was also the boom in demand both for the new five-nanometre semi-conductors, and the old 20-nanometre type. They stopped production of the 5nm ones to increase the quantity of the 20nm versions, but still we had limited availability.

Has the war in Ukraine affected production?

Not in the motorcycle business, more for the car industry. Automotive wiring harnesses and suchlike were heavily affected, but not for motorcycles. In the short term the escalating price of energy supplies was a concern, although that's finally reducing, but jumping back to the first half of last year the ridiculous increase in transportation costs due to the constraints in the supply chain were a serious concern. Normally a 40-foot container from China to Rotterdam or Hamburg should cost around $3500, but a year ago it was $24,000! And when you asked the logistics company, they'd reply: "Would you like to get the goods, or not? Otherwise we have another customer for that shipment." Crazy.

So did these issues affect the size of your workforce?

No, we have increased the total workforce 16 percent with 839 new staff in the last year, so now we employ 6088 people – around 5000 here in Austria and 1000 abroad. By the way, about 1200 employees are engaged in product development.

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How many of the units sold were on- or off-road?

Forty percent off-road and 60 percent street. We are copying what the car industry is doing, like Volkswagen, so using the same engine with different covers branded as KTM or Husqvarna or GasGas. When I first started doing this in 2013, I was concerned about customer reaction, but it's working just fine. I kept my market share with KTM, and I took overall market share from the Japanese thanks to the other brands.

It seems the relationship with CFMoto has evolved to be much closer than before. Do you now own part of their equity; are they part of the Pierer Mobility family?

Not completely – we own 49 percent of the joint venture that we set up four years ago and, as our contribution to the equity, we brought in intellectual property relating to design and engineering. If you go to China and bring intellectual property with you, you must put a price tag on it, otherwise you'll wind up disposing of it anyway – free of charge. The Chinese want to rule

“CHINA IS AHEAD BECAUSE THE CHINESE GUYS ARE SO FAST – I’M SERIOUSLY IMPRESSED”

the world, so to deal with them and to guide them in a joint venture is a certain challenge.

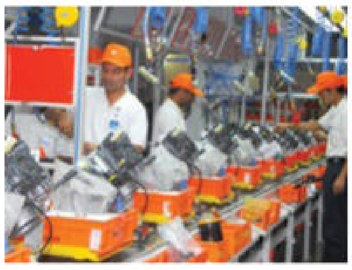
Will all future middleweight KTM, Husqvarna and GasGas twin-cylinder models be manufactured in China?
That’s the plan – the quality of manufacture is extremely high, really, completely on a par with making them in Austria. They’ll be made in China, and the premium bikes in Austria. I distinguish between premium and entry-level middle-class models. But I was in India in January, and it seems now even the twin-cylinder bikes can also be made there, which is very helpful.

I thought your strategy had been for CFMoto to concentrate on producing twin-cylinder middleweight models, and Bajaj in India the single-cylinder machines?
That was our strategy. But in the next two years, the twins will also be made in India.

So will this be the RC490 500cc parallel-twin that you’ve been working on?
No, it’ll be the 790 – why should I reinvent everything from scratch?! Maybe they’ll name it the 690 or whatever like BMW, but that’s not an issue. Chinese products don’t have any chance in India, where they have to have an Indian provenance – if you show up with a Chinese-made model, forget it. The 500 class for me is not an interesting category anymore, so we stopped the RC490 because we are bringing the 790 down a little bit. So we’re talking about the 690 or 650 – it’s better for marketing.

So you’re saying the 790 parallel-twin KTM will be made in India within the next two years?
We will have the 790 built there for sure, and the nakedbike will be the first one.

6
BAJAJ
Distinctly Ahead



1. KTM’s 2023 MotoGP factory riders: Brad Binder and Aussie Jack Miller

2. Bajaj boss, Rajiv Bajaj. Pierer Mobility is strengthening its relationship with the massive Indian company

3. KTM 200 Duke production in India - the small-capacity naked class has been a bonanza for KTM

4. Pierer addresses the KTM MotoGP troops at the 2019 round in Austria

5. “Where’s that washer?”

6. The Bajaj logo - one which we’ll be seeing a lot more of in the future...

Will these be only for India, or will they be sold in western markets, too?
The idea is that India takes care of India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Indonesia.

But for Australia?
India, yes, for sure India. However, for Asian markets China is ahead because the Chinese guys are so fast – I’m seriously impressed. They are the world champions in copying, but to a high level. So within less than two years we have transferred our entire 790 platform to them with a 100 percent supply chain in China, and it’s working very well – the quality is excellent. So we are starting this year to handle CFMoto distribution for the whole of Europe.

And CFMoto has built a new factory in its Hangzhou base to accommodate this?
Yes, it’s our CFMoto and KTM joint venture plant, with a capacity of around 50,000 units a year, and last year we already made almost 20,000 despite Covid still being in China. It’s a nice result, and I’m impressed, so now we’ll speed things up.

CFMoto is about to launch two large-capacity models: a 1000cc V4 superbike and a 1279cc nakedbike. Are these derived from KTM models?
The Chinese are very aggressive and very brave, they are world class in copying and announcing new models. I don’t know who they were copying with these ideas, but they are nothing to do with us.

But if these models come to market, will you sell these through your dealerships?
Let’s see how long it takes to get production ready with such models...

Is your relationship with Bajaj still as strong now as it used to be in light of your growing alliance with CFMoto?

Between Rajiv Bajaj and me, it's turned out to be a real friendship. It's a win-win situation for us both and, if we are both doing good, he's benefitting and vice versa. Without Bajaj we never would have leveraged production to the level that we are at now.

Will Bajaj only make KTM-branded bikes for you besides his own products?
No, Rajiv is now also doing Husqvarna for us, and then for many years he's been trying to do something with Triumph, which hopefully will finally come to market later this year, or next year. They were supposed to be launching their first joint venture model about now, but it seems the earliest it will now come is in autumn, because they made some more research and changed the styling, or something.

Is the relationship between Triumph and Bajaj a problem for you?
No, I like competition, it keeps you alive, keeps you fresh!

"I LIKE COMPETITION, IT KEEPS YOU ALIVE, KEEPS YOU FRESH!"

So if Mr Bajaj ends up taking over control of Triumph, which seems possible, it would be no problem for you?
No, I've known for a while that's his long-term strategy – we've discussed it.

GasGas has an electric trials bike, but will KTM ever have a mainstream electric model?
We have already an electric model, the Freeride, plus all the kids' bikes. If you stop in front of a beer garden riding an e-bike, you take off your helmet and everybody is looking to you, and you're proud to be riding a silent electric motorcycle – but if it's a scooter, it's very different. That's the reason we don't have any KTM e-scooters. That's Piaggio's job, not mine.

But CFMoto has an e-scooter?
Yes, we already processed it to fulfil European regulations, so if it works we'll take it into distribution. Look, very often I get asked in investors' meetings about equipping our motorcycles with electric powertrains.

Then we get talking about energy density, which with a combustion engine is 0.8kg per litre. If you want to get the same energy density with a lithium-ion battery pack, you're adding up to 10 times the size – 10 times. I've been riding an enduro bike with nine or 10 litres of fuel, where should I put in the 100 kilos to get the electric equivalent – in my rucksack? Don't talk about an adventure bike with pretensions for covering big distances on or off-road. This is stupid.

I have seen e-companies slump into a financial crisis – Vectrix wound up €120 million ($A191m) in debt; Zero, if you look closely, is burning money, and Harley LiveWire? Completely unprofitable! All the new electric start-ups are completely non-viable. But as soon as it's a small battery, that's different. We are selling kids' motocross electric bikes very nicely – with a small battery, you keep your margin.

Kids' products are perfect: you are no longer your

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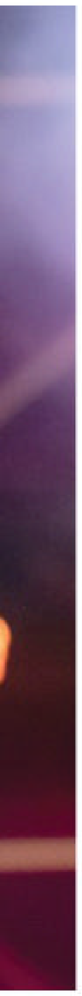
FACTORY RACING



4
春风动力
CFMOTO

1. Kevin Benavides celebrates after his victory in the 2023 Dakar Rally on the factory KTM

2. And with the winning trophy after pipping Aussie teammate Toby Price

3. KTM's sales and marketing boss, Hubert Trunkenpolz

4. The CFMoto factory in China

5. KTM HQ in Mattighofen

6. Lai Guogui, the decade-plus chairman of CFMoto

kid's mechanic, it's safer because you can do it in your garden without disturbing your neighbour, and certainly don't underrate the decision maker who is the mother – if the product is silent, she perceives it as safe.

For your off-road models, will you make it easy to exchange batteries?
No, it's too complicated and expensive – it's just increasing your production costs.

Are you interested in developing synthetic fuel?
Yes, for sure – we heavily support that, we have set up alliances or lobbying groups for synthetic fuel with many different European companies. Politicians are finally recognising that we have 1.6 billion combustion vehicles around the globe, so how should we deal with these? Fortunately, just recently when Brussels was trying to introduce a ban from 2035 onwards for all new combustion engines, the German and Italian ministers achieved an exemption for synthetic fuel-equipped vehicles.

BMW is extremely focused on synthetic fuel – are you too?
Yes, the whole industry, because we are all participants, the Japanese, the Indians… all of us.

How about hydrogen? The four Japanese companies are pursuing a joint venture on this.
No. It's expensive, and the logistics are not easy. Even if you have liquid hydrogen, you can't use existing pipelines to bring it to the existing point of sale. Hydrogen is the smallest and lightest molecule in the universe, so it leaks easily and to prevent its release requires costly solutions. That's the advantage of synthetic fuel: you can distribute it right away. It's a scientific gasoline, you can fill your existing motorcycle with it, and it works just fine.

What's your long-term projection for KTM's two-stroke range?
When I started in KTM 30 years ago, I had to take the decision whether or not to produce a new 125cc two-stroke platform. So many comments were made that the two-stroke is dead, but because a two-stroke motor is much cheaper to develop than a four-stroke, finally I said let's do it. And 30 years later it's still alive in a quantity which I shouldn't name, but we're talking about 50,000 bikes a year. We will continue to make the two-stroke because the customer wants it, and with direct fuel injection we can even achieve street-legal homologation.

Will you make a two-stroke roadbike?
No – sorry, I know it would be popular, but we won't do it. I'm fighting enough wars with the bureaucrats already! Enduro models is where we draw the line.

Is KTM developing a full-fairing RC890 twin-cylinder sportsbike as a 2024 model?
Yes, I think it will be launched around a year and a half from now, as a 2025 model.

Let's talk about MV Agusta. Last November you purchased 25.1 percent of the equity from Timur Sardarov. What's the plan?
We'll take care of the whole supply chain, we'll buy all the parts needed for MV Agusta's production for the coming year, and then we'll take over worldwide distribution. This is the first step to help them make their entire operation profitable.

But presumably your involvement will include certain product development strategies – like should MV Agusta be making the Lucky Explorer 9.5 and 5.5?
You're right, nobody needs those, and especially not branded with that name. Adventure bikes are a big market sector, but they're also the most difficult and competitive segment. Nobody is waiting for such a model from MV Agusta.

So what kind of products do you think MV Agusta

1. MV Agustas awaiting dispatch

2. The CEO of MV Agusta, Russian Timur Sardarov

3. Pierer wants to focus on MV Agusta's high-end range, such as the Brutale Rush

4. Pierer at the 2023 Dakar Rally victory celebrations

should be making?
I wouldn't say luxury, but it's premium high-end. I think the Brutale would be a good basis for some very nice developments, but for me the model that still captures the essence of MV Agusta is the F4.

But just to give you some new information, our colleague Gerald Kiska is going to set up a subsidiary Kiska Design studio within the MV Agusta factory.

It's very important because you have to focus on stabilising the existing product line, on cleaning up the current range of models – while still thinking ahead. And that takes time, but Gerald understands what must be done.

Do you believe MV Agustas must be designed in Italy?
That is absolutely correct, but we also have a bit of a problem. Due to our long-term success, anyone looking for designers all come to Kiska Design to sign up newcomers. So you end up educating them and, after a couple of years, they disappear elsewhere – and that's always a loss. This has been going on for the past 30 years ever since Kiska Design and I teamed up to rescue KTM. But with the MV Agusta and Kiska operation, we must make sure we keep the people we choose to work there.

Must MV have more than just high-end niche models in order to be able to generate volume?
Sure, we must have premium middleweight models. Their new three-cylinder engine, the 920, 950, it's a very good engine, but now we have to make it compliant for Euro 5.2, which is a little bit tricky. A lot of the big displacement owners in the high-end class are stepping down to smaller capacity models because they're getting older, so the weight of the bike, and the rideability, the handling, it all becomes easier. I met several guys who stepped down from a 1290 Super Adventure to a 390 Adventure because of this.

So do you think a 390 Adventure or a 590 Adventure made in China with the MV Agusta name will be okay?
No, don't even think about such a thing, never ever! It must stay premium in terms of capacity as well as design, and provenance. All MV Agustas must be made in Italy, and the smallest capacity will be the 900 three-cylinder.

Will KTM engineers assume responsibility for future technical development of MV Agusta products?
Yes, for sure, we've already helped them on engines and this will expand considerably.

What are your projections for Pierer Mobility in the next five years?
Achieving a four-billion euro ($A6.5b) turnover by 2028, with three billion ($A4.79b) in the short-term, hopefully this year. Every year on average we've grown by 15 percent or better – that's very satisfying.

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GREATEST DAYS

It's hard to believe it's been 20 years, but did those early days of 990cc GP bikes produce the greatest grand prix bike **of all time?**

WORDS **MAT OXLEY** + PHOTOGRAPHY **GOLD&GOOSE, AMCN ARCHIVES AND HENK KEULEMANS**

When the first MotoGP rules were first announced, Suzuki and Yamaha went away and pretty much shoehorned 990cc four-stroke engines into revised 500 chassis, while Honda started all over.

The result was the RC211V, arguably the greatest GP bike of all time, with an ingenious engine configuration at its heart.

"Soon these bikes will become legends," said Valentino Rossi at the end of the five-year reign of the first big-bore MotoGP bikes, the wild 990cc four-strokes that arrived in 2002 and were foolishly replaced by the hated, peaky 800s in 2007.

Many MotoGP paddock insiders and fans still remember the 990 years as a golden moment of motorcycle excitement. You could argue that although the era started in 2002 it only really got going the following year, when Ducati's mind-bogglingly fast Desmosedici joined Honda's sublime RC211V, Aprilia's bonkers RS3 Cube, Yamaha's initially underwhelming YZR-M1, Suzuki's problematic GSV-R and Kawasaki's short-lived Ninja ZX-RR on the grid.

The first MotoGP rules were written to encourage technical diversity, so triples were allowed to be lighter than fours and fives, which could be lighter than sixes. The grid therefore featured some very different answers to the question of going around a racetrack as fast as possible: Aprilia built a pneumatic-valve inline triple, Ducati and Suzuki made V4s, Kawasaki and Yamaha inline-fours and Honda and Proton V5s, taking advantage of the fact that fives could run the same minimum weight as fours.

And in 2002 there were still two-stroke 500s in the mix – Honda NSR500 and Yamaha YZR500 V4s and 'King' Kenny Roberts' Proton V3. MotoGP nearly got a six too, when Czech minimoto-manufacturer Blata started work on a V6 in 2004. But the project was terminated before the bike had even been built.

There hadn't been such an assortment of machinery in GP racing for 30 years, since the early 1970s when Giacomo Agostini and his MV Agusta four-stroke triple lined up against Kawasaki two-stroke triples, Yamaha two-stroke twins, Matchless four-stroke singles and the Konig, a motorcycle powered by a flat-four two-stroke outboard engine.

These were the also shining, innocent days, just before electronic rider controls and then computer modelling became a vital part of MotoGP, when riders laid rubber as they powered out of corners, controlling slides with the throttle and fighting the bikes on the brakes, before anti-spin and engine braking maps eventually fixed those problems.

The racing was all-action, the bikes snaking this way and that, riders dancing left and right trying to maintain control. It's no surprise that it took pitlane engineers a while to get the hang of the 990s, because these were the first four-stroke prototype racebikes since MV's last GP season in 1976 and Honda's fabulous but flawed oval-piston NR500, born a few years later.

③

①

1. The late Nicky Hayden at Valencia in 2003 - three years later he would win the MotoGP title at the same venue

2. The Aprilia RS3 Cube was the ultimate 'light switch' - a four-stroke but very 500cc two-stroke like...

3. Rossi on the masterful Honda RC211V in 2003

4. Rossi's 2006 Yamaha

5. Capirossi gets the holeshot at Brno in 2006 ahead of Hayden and Rossi

6. The Aprilia engine, which successfully scared its riders until the end of 2004

7. Kwaka's first MotoGP bike, an inline four like the Yamaha

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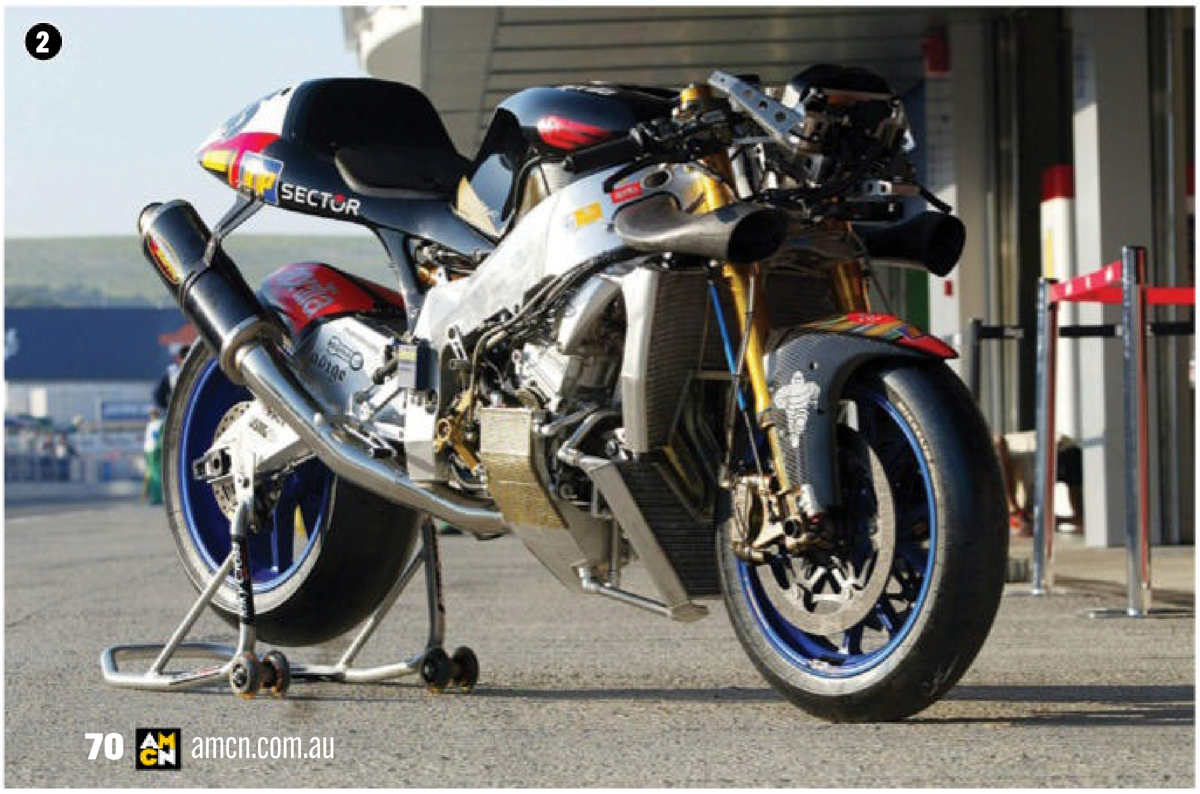

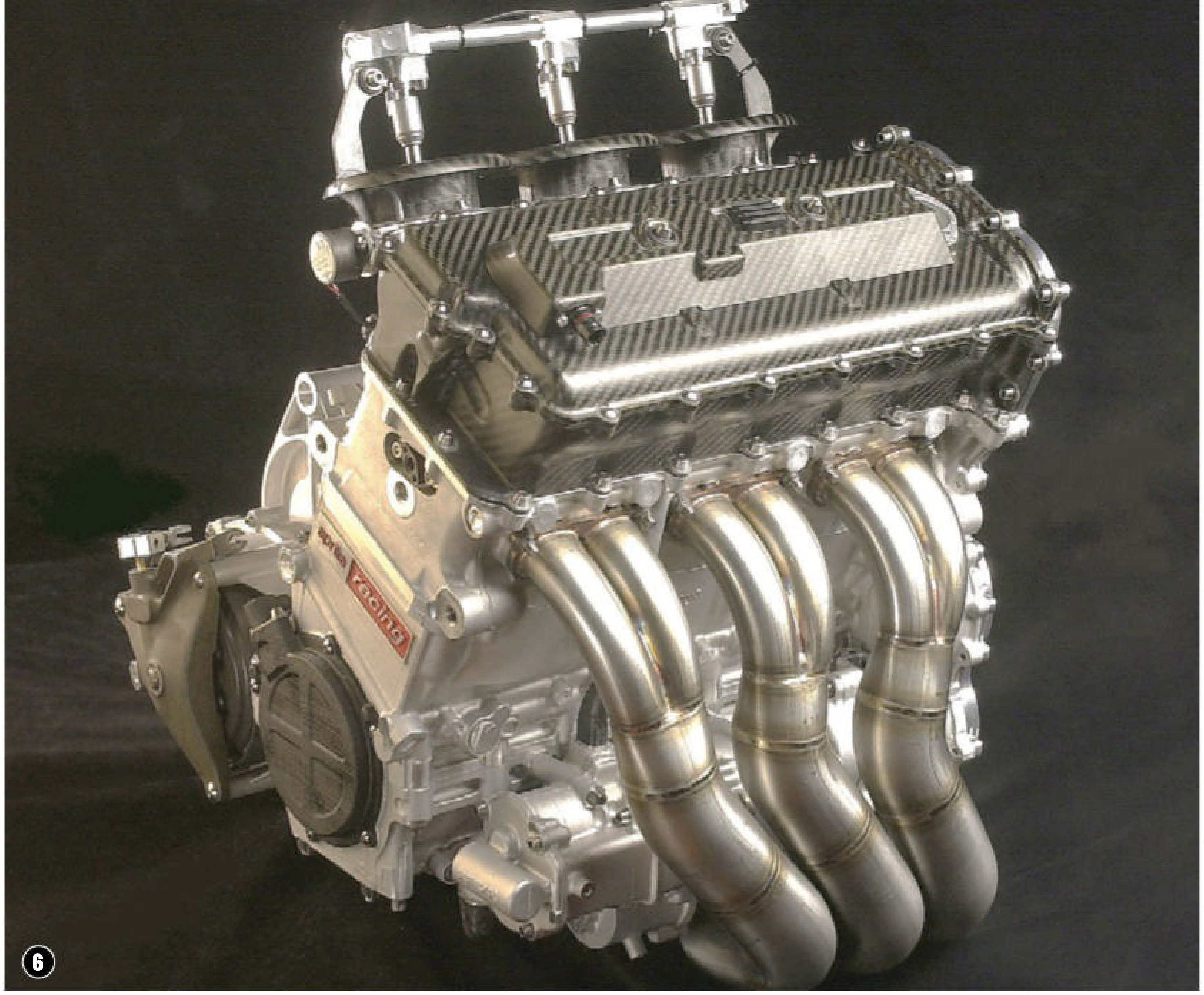

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SOME FANS AND SOME PADDOCK PEOPLE HATED THE MOVE FROM 'STINKWHEELS' TO 'DIESELS'

In 2002 the 990s did beat the 500 two-strokes, which had ruled since the mid-70s, because obviously that's what they were designed to do with their 98 percent engine capacity advantage.

Some fans and some paddock people hated the move from 'stinkwheels' to 'diesels', but why race two-strokes when everyone had stopped selling them? Nevertheless, several riders mourned their passing by wearing black armbands at the season-ending race, because the grid was already set to go fully four-stroke from 2003.

The four-strokes dominated because they had more speed and because they're better at getting around a racetrack.

"A four-stroke is easier because when you're mid-corner on a 500 you have zero power," explained Rossi's crew chief Jeremy Burgess. "When you open the throttle from the lowest rpm point, say 6000rpm, the 500's not making

7

any more power than a streetbike, but then it suddenly builds to 190hp. On the four-stroke you touch the throttle mid-corner and you've already got tons of torque, so from that point you can open the throttle fairly quickly."

On the other hand, the best riders and engineers also mourned the 500s because they were ultimately so tricky to master, both on track and in pitlane.

"Setting up the two-stroke was harder," said Rossi. "And if the setting wasn't 100 percent the bike was a disaster, which was a big challenge for me and also for the mechanics."

Burgess agreed: "It's just less brain power with the four-stroke."

Some older riders who had enjoyed and suffered earlier, nastier 500s thought the same. When someone asked Frenchman Christian Sarron, winner of the 1985 West German 500cc GP, what he thought of the 990s, he swiftly replied: "They're nice bikes… for girls" (we're sure he wouldn't use that analogy today).

Rossi ruled the 990 era, cruising to the first two titles on Honda's RC213V, which was in a different league to its rivals. Then he fell out with HRC and defected to Yamaha for 2004 to ride the nightmarish YZR-M1, which hadn't won a single race the previous year.

Yamaha had been so embarrassed during 2003 that it considered quitting. Instead, it decided not to go home but go hard, signing Rossi. Their plan was a two-year project: fix what was apparently a horrible motorcycle in 2004, then win the title in 2005, Yamaha's 50th anniversary.

In fact Rossi and his crew fixed the YZR-M1 in two days during the first pre-season tests. The Italian immediately identified the main problems. First, he kept losing the front entering corners, which explained why Yamaha's 2003 lead rider Alex Barros had crashed his YZR-M1 so often. Second, the bike was heavy to throw around.

Rossi told his crew that the bike kept accelerating as he braked into corners. Crew chief Jeremy Burgess asked Yamaha's electronics engineers to check the engine braking software. They did and found that whenever Rossi squeezed the front-brake lever the program was opening the throttle, instead of closing it. How had Yamaha and its previous riders not clocked this?!

There were two quick and easy solutions to making the bike more manoeuvrable. Burgess discovered the rubber air inlet at the base of the fairing nose was fouling the front mudguard during heavy braking (again, how had Yamaha not spotted this?) and suggested a massive 15mm rise in overall ride height.

Yamaha engineers freaked out but allowed the changes and that was that – the YZR-M1's handling problems were solved.

Of course, Yamaha also played an important role in fixing the YZR-M1, with chief engineer Masao Furusawa creating a long-bang firing configuration to improve power delivery and traction. By the end of the tests Rossi was fastest and had broken the lap record. Two months later he won the opening race of 2004

THERE WERE TWO QUICK AND EASY SOLUTIONS TO MAKING THE BIKE MORE MANOEUVRABLE

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1. Gibernau (#15), Capirossi (#65) and Rossi in close company at Phillip Island

2. Rossi sensationally defected from Honda to Yamaha in 2004, and he won the first GP of the year in South Africa

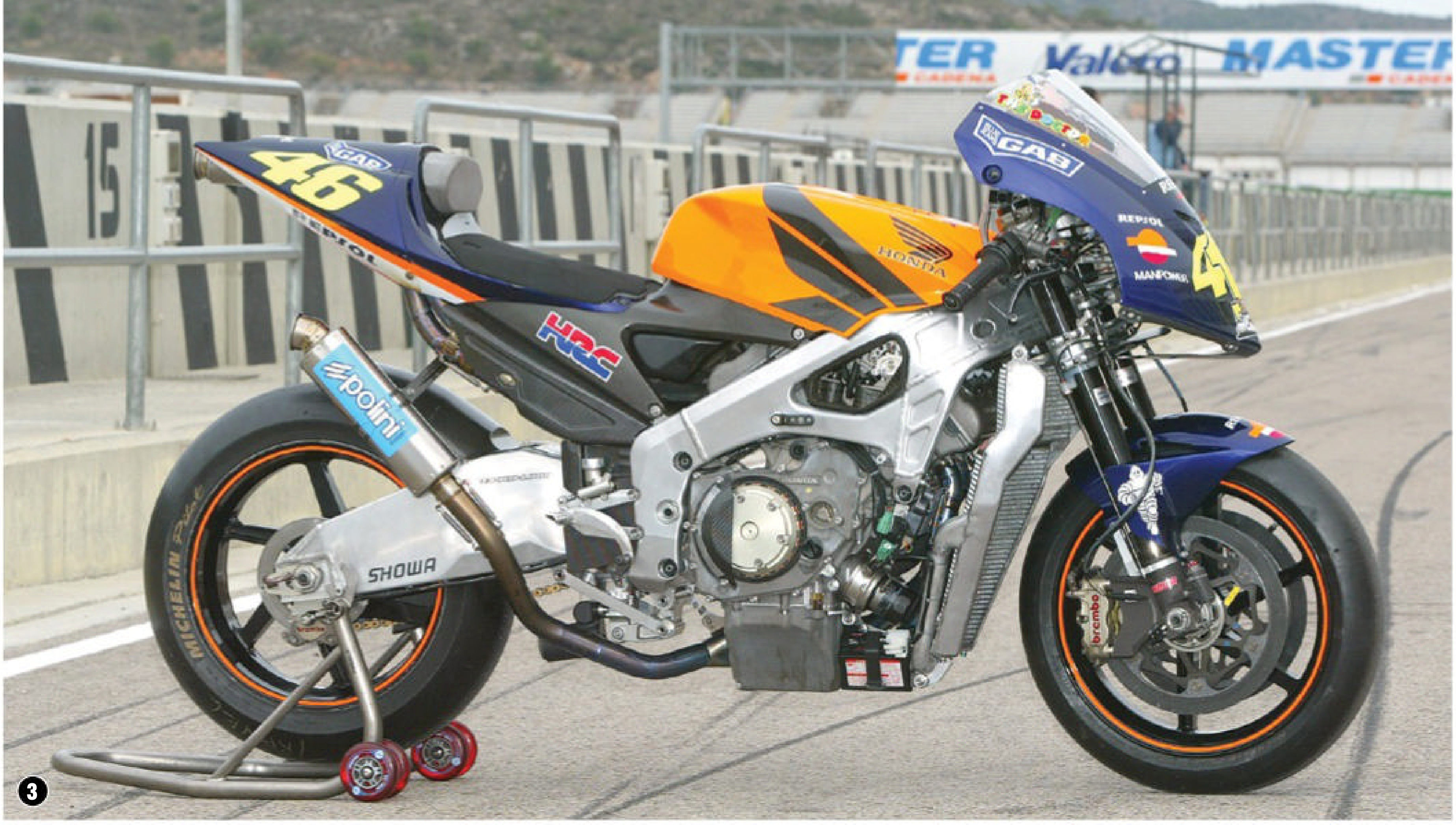
3. Honda's maiden MotoGP-winning RC211V in 2002

4. The brains behind the Honda RC211V, Tomoo Shiozaki

5. Parts of the puzzle: a Honda tech presentation in 2006

6. …and all back together!

7. Honda was the only manufacturer to start MotoGP with a V5 design



THE GENIUS OF HONDA'S RC211V

THE RC211V'S engine was basically a V4 with a fifth cylinder acting as a balancer, producing lots of useable power. The bike won 48 of the 82 races of the 990cc era.

The chassis was just as clever, utilising many of the lessons Honda had learned during the final years of 500 racing but hadn't yet implemented. For example, much of the fuel tank was moved below the seat, so the bike was easier to handle, especially with a full tank.

"Before we started work on the four-stroke everyone thought that 200hp was the limit for 500s but our initial target for the RCV was 220hp," says RC211V designer, Tomoo Shiozaki. "When you obtain more power from a two-stroke, the power character becomes bad. But the four-stroke has a very gentle character from bottom to middle rpm, so we can get over 200 and the power character is still good.

"When we began, everyone at HRC gave ideas, like pneumatic valves. However, the purpose of that system is high rpm power which is not necessary with a 990cc engine, because it's easy for us to get as much horsepower as we need.

"We also worked very hard on the chassis. The RCV frame doesn't have such deep beam sections because we wanted some flex to change the harmonics of the chassis - sliding a bike is easier and not so snappy if the chassis isn't totally rigid.

"Mass centralisation was a big target, so we designed new rear suspension [with the shock not attached to the frame at either end, but at the swingarm at one end and a linkage at the other] to make space for the low-down fuel tank. This also reduced chatter, because normal suspension, with the shock attached to the chassis, transfers chatter forces directly to the chassis.

"With the low-down tank the bike is better at the start of races, with full fuel load. The NSR500 was only at 70 percent of its performance potential in the early laps but the RCV is more like 80 to 90 percent."

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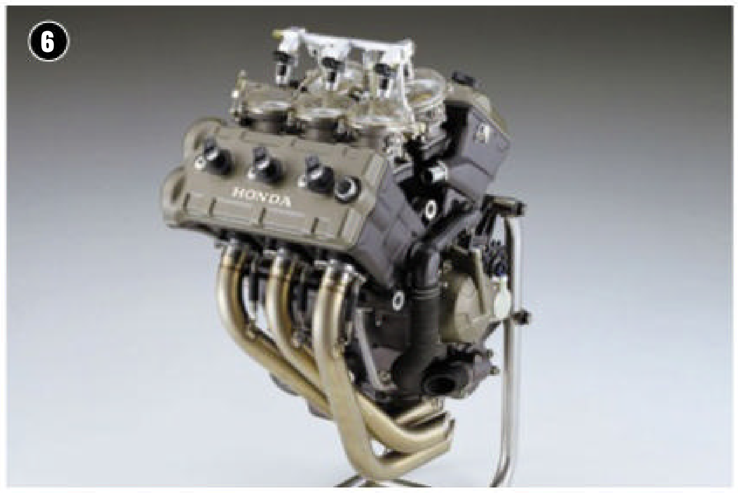
REPSOL
46
GAB
Honda Racing



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to become the first rider in history to win two consecutive premier-class GPs on different makes of machinery. And a few months after that he secured the title, which he successfully defended in 2005. So Rossi won four of the five 990cc titles, to Nicky Hayden's single success in 2006.

The 990s started out making a gentle 220hp, which quite quickly became a not-so-gentle 250. Creating a linear power curve and a flat-as-possible torque curve were the secret to success. And Honda got there first.

"A flat torque curve means you can spin up the tyre at a particular throttle opening and, although the rpm comes up, the torque doesn't come up with it," said Team Roberts engineer Tom O'Kane. "Then if you hold a constant throttle the same amount of torque that broke the tyre loose is still there, so you just hold the throttle and the bike comes back into line. That's what riders of the RC211V always say: they can get sideways, then get back into line whenever they want."

Which is exactly what Aprilia riders weren't saying – the Cube behaved more like a 500, which is why the project was shut down at the end of 2004, putting factory rider Jeremy McWilliams out of a job. Not that he minded...

"That bike wanted to kill you everywhere," remembers the Northern Irishman. "It made lots of horsepower but in all the wrong places. I think it broke every one of my ribs twice in 2004. It had this really weird torque curve, so the engineers tried to fill in the holes in the curve with clever fuel and torque maps.

"It started making torque at around 9000rpm, then it dropped away and then there was a really sharp torque peak at 12,500, which sent the bike sideways and fired you on your nose."

The manufacturer which became very good at making lots of power that riders could put to the ground, thanks in part to advanced electronics, was Ducati. It arrived slightly late to the party, but was soon popping champagne corks when Loris Capirossi won Ducati its first premier-class victory only six races into the 2003 championship.

Ducati's desmodromic-valve Desmosedici was immediately the fastest thing on the grid, reaching 331.5km/h at Mugello that year. (And the bike is still MotoGP's fastest, clocking 363.2km/h last year.) Its steel-trellis frame worked well but when Capirossi and teammate Troy Bayliss asked for too much, it spectacularly tied them in knots.

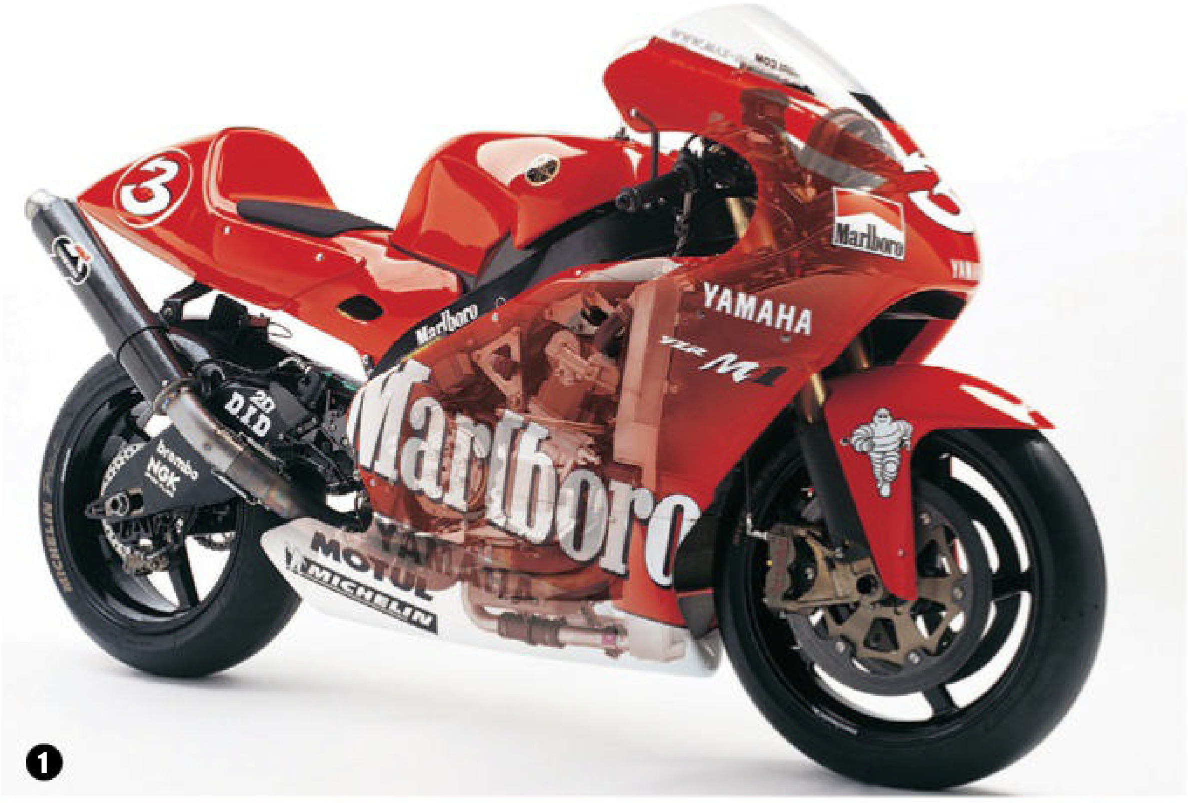
The curtain fall of the 990 era couldn't have been better – the 2006 season-ending Valencia GP still rates as the greatest events of GP history. Rossi went into the weekend leading Hayden by a few points, after the American had lost the series lead at the previous race when he'd been taken out by his teammate. But Rossi crashed at Valencia while Hayden finished third to claim the title and Bayliss won the race. That Sunday race had everything, like a (much better) motorcycling version of *Days of Thunder*.

What came next was the start of an ugly period for MotoGP. The 990s were replaced by 800cc engines, which were the ultimate result of an inquiry into the death of Honda star Daijiro Kato at Suzuka in 2003.

Those in charge believed the bikes needed to be slowed down but the 800s were actually faster around many racetracks, despite peaky power delivery which engineers fixed with increasingly complex electronic rider controls. The 800s were one-line only motorcycles, so MotoGP became a boring game of follow the leader.

At the same time tobacco sponsorship was banned and a year later the global financial crisis hit. After those five glorious years MotoGP was in a mess – much less action and no money...

THE 800S WERE ONE-LINE MOTORCYCLES, SO MOTOGP BECAME A BORING GAME OF FOLLOW THE LEADER



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GRAN PREMIO MARLBORO DE LA COMUNITAT VALENCIANA
Ricardo Tormo 2004

1. Yamaha's maiden YZR-M1, which Max Biaggi rode to second place behind arch-rival Rossi in 2002

2. The 2004 Valencia podium: (L to R) Biaggi, Rossi and Aussie hardman Troy Bayliss

3. The 2002 version of the YZR-M1 inline four

4. Rossi during one of his first post-500GP shakedown tests on the RC211V

5. Japan's Noriyuki Haga on the Aprilia in 2003

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WORDS **HAMISH COOPER** + PHOTOGRAPHY **PHIL AYNSLEY**

UNCHAINED MELODIES

After two years of interruptions, classic racing is back in a big way with a new class bringing out some of the bikes mothballed after the demise of the Island Classic International Challenge

The Post Classic Racing Association of NSW took on a mighty challenge by hosting the 2023 Festival of Speed at Sydney Motorsport Park and introducing 'international' rules for the new class called Unchained Formula One.

Before the event, club president Ken Lindsay said that including what he called "international rule classic machines" would provide "entertainment for all tastes". He described the new Unchained Formula One class as "a more open combination of Australian, New Zealand, USA and British historic rules" – and it certainly provided racing as intense and skilled as any modern class of competition.

Hopefully next year's event will bring out the remaining big-name Australian teams which previously competed in the International Challenge at Phillip Island but have gone into hibernation since 2020.

While it will take years for international shipping to return to affordable levels, there is no reason why global stars wouldn't want to fly out as guest riders on Australian machinery. Entries of around 180 competitors, many running bikes in several classes, and a healthy trade and club stand alley bode well for the future of the festival.

Here is a cross-section of competitors and their motorcycles at the event. →

BSA
Gold Star

42
22
27B
SUZUKI
SUZUKI
92
1289
GHANDA SUPPLY CO.
SURFCOAST AUS.84

KEN SAYS ONGOING DEVELOPMENT MEANS THESE BIG TWINS "LIVE IN AN INTENSIVE-CARE WARD"..

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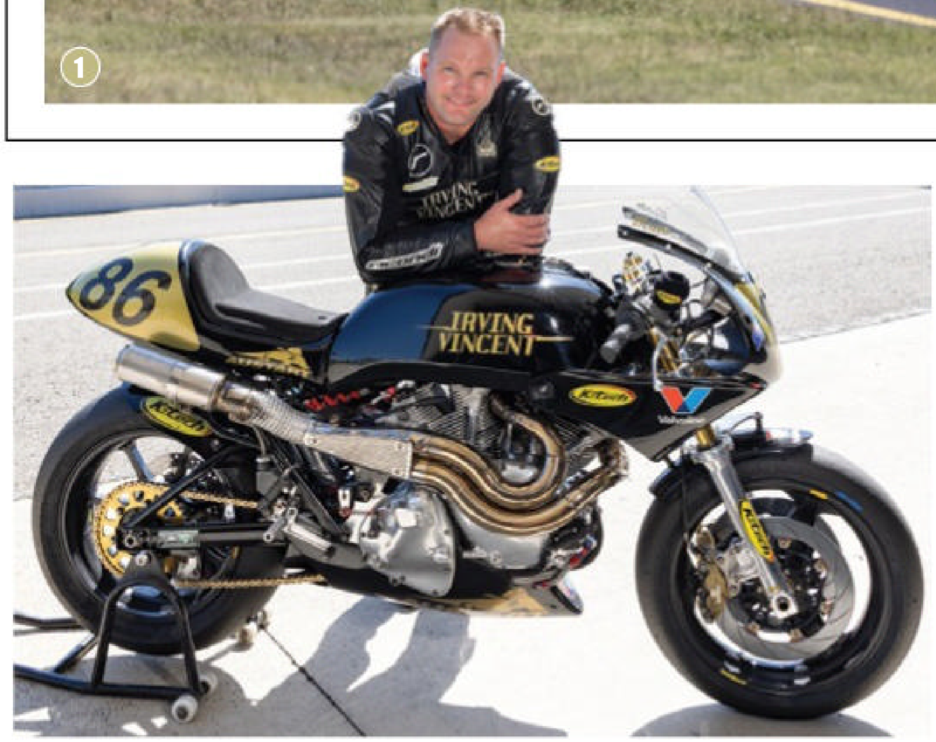
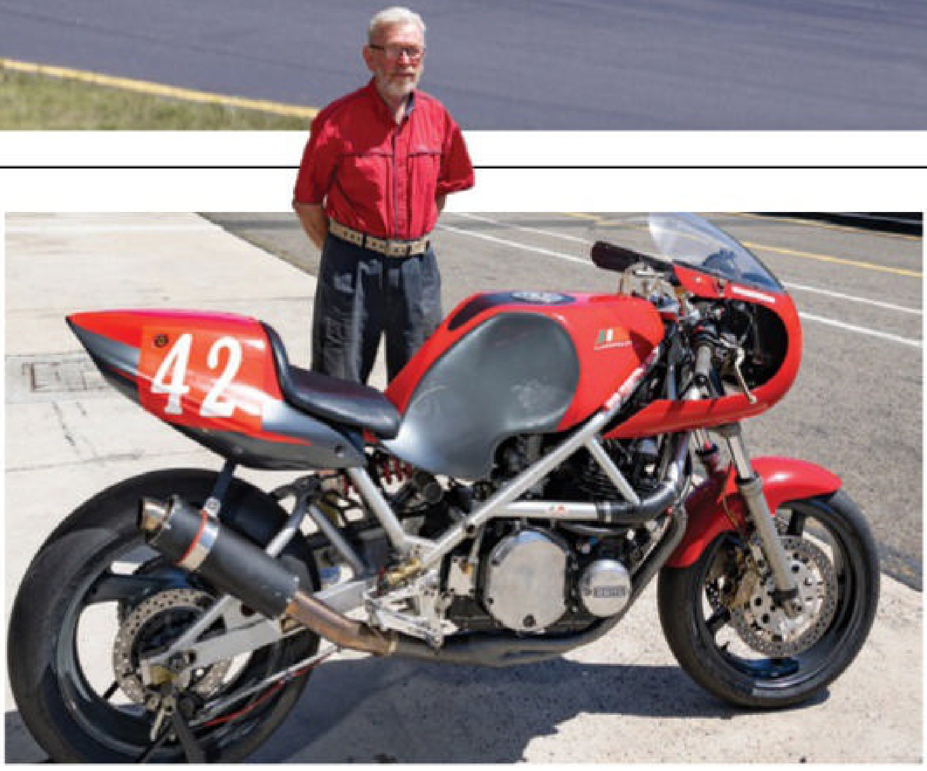




BEAU BEATON

UNCHAINED FORMULA ONE IRVING VINCENT

"Bikes like these are what the big-name riders want to race," said Ken Horner. He's waited two years for a class similar to Phillip Island's International Challenge to be organised. Over two decades, the Challenge saw some of the world's most famous riders slug it out on classic racing's fastest, most tech-loaded and expensive motorcycles. Beau Beaton, a long-time associate of the Irving Vincent outfit, was one rider who really took it to the international teams from the UK, USA, Ireland and New Zealand. So it was a no-brainer he was first to climb aboard the latest Irving Vincent.

It's a beast that was out-accelerating much more modern motorcycles. Punched out to 1400cc, this brute runs a rare 43mm front fork with one of the first four-piston calipers produced by Brembo in 1982. Ken says ongoing development means these big twins "live in an intensive-care ward". Similarly he predicts a period of nurturing to get big-name riders and bikes like his back out on track after the Covid-19 pandemic.

"International freight costs are poisonous right now," he says, "but if these local bikes are brought back out the riders will appear. It's up to the entrants to enter; the rest will look after itself."

MICK LENDRUM

1981 KAWASAKI MOTOPLAST

You'll seldom meet a more enthusiastic classic racer than Mick Lendrum. "I'm just there having fun, but I did set a PB this weekend," he said as he wheeled away a very rare motorcycle. Italy's Motoplast frame often gets confused with France's Moto Martin as both look similar and were produced around the same time for Formula One and endurance racing, plus a road-going option for wealthy riders.

Mick, who has had a long career in motorcycle sales and servicing, has owned his Motoplast since 1981 when just a handful were imported into Australia. Perhaps as few as 70 frames were produced over three years, mostly to house Kawasaki's 900cc/1000cc four-cylinder engines. Over the years, Mick has used his industry contacts to source a close-ratio gearbox and some go-fast goodies to increase engine capacity to 1135cc. He also now owns four of the frames brought into Australia.

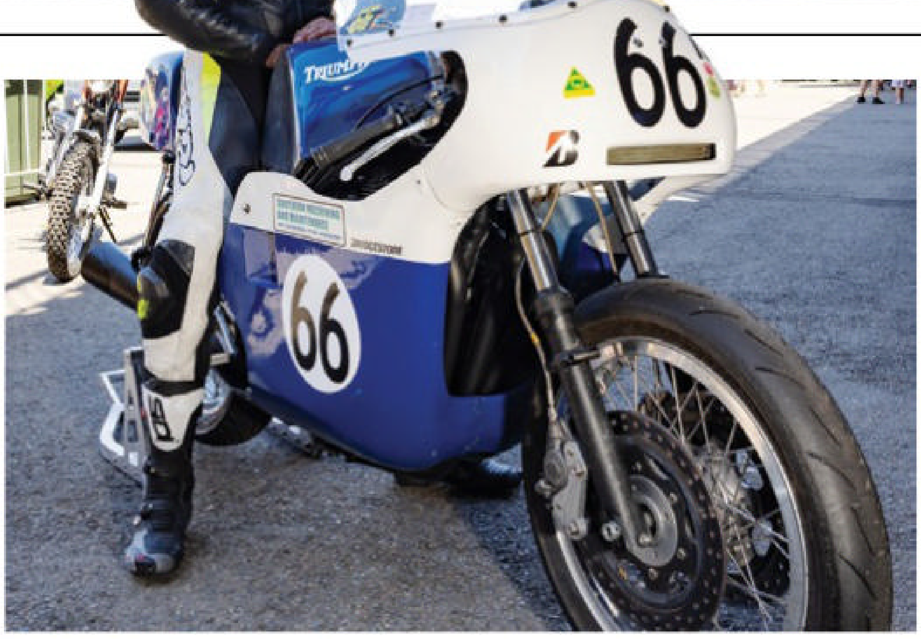
At the Festival of Speed, his Motoplast was eligible for several classes covering the 1980s plus the new Unchained Formula One. This meant Mick was up against riders like former world Superbike champion Troy Corser, Alex Phillis, Aaron Morris and rising ASBK star Jack Passfield.

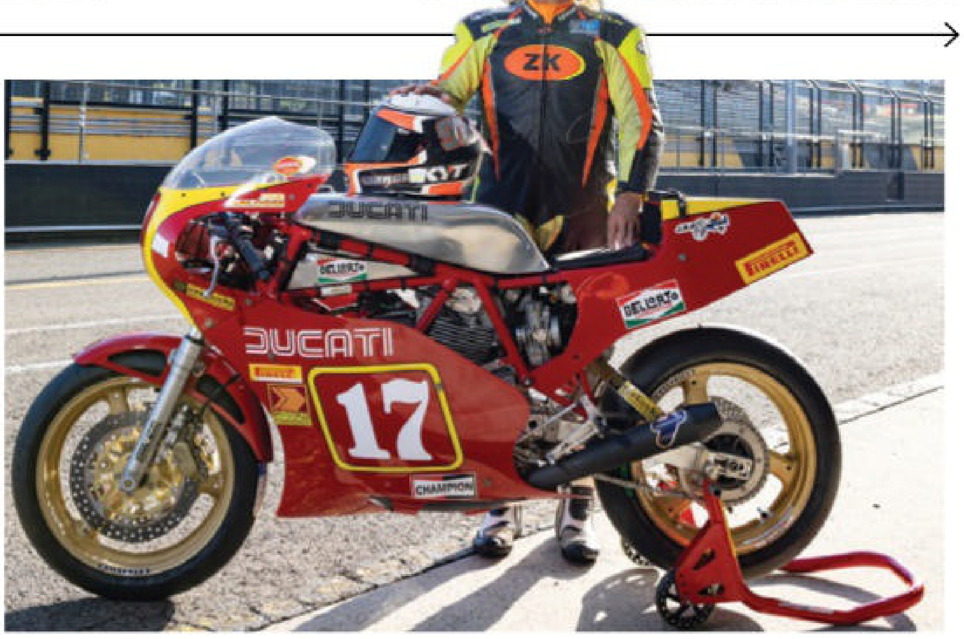
1. Feel the noise! Aiden Coote (#66) gets his howling triple off the line ahead of Mitchell Mulligan (#3), Robert Marriner (#40) and Glenn Hindle (#50)

2. Robert Young (Ducati 888) leads Phillip Bevan (Honda VFR750) – a repeat of early WorldSBK competition

3. A strong sidecar entry included Jamie Crass and Lee Menzies

4. Classic racebikes need a lot of love





AAIDEN COOTE

1972 ROB NORTH TRIUMPH

West Australian classic racers aren't fazed by distance. To get Aaiden Coote on his immaculate Rob North triple in Sydney involved owner Peter Curry undertaking a round trip of 8000km. However, Curry is well used to this scenario.

"I commit to two events on the eastern seaboard each year, this Festival of Speed and wherever the national titles are held," he says. Curry had owned this triple since 2012, and Coote started riding it early on despite being just 21 years old. Over the years the partnership has been rewarded with shelves of trophies.

At this event, Coote made a clean sweep of the Post Classic 750cc class and finished third in the Period 4 1300cc class, despite his bike retaining its standard 750cc bore size. It's been remarkably reliable over the years, a result of Curry employing the best brains in the business from around the world. For example, he sent the heads to Richard Peckett of P&M in the UK, who converted them to centre-mounted spark plugs. The crankcases were sent to New Zealand's Bruce Verdon, who supplied and fitted one of his TT Industries gearboxes. Megacycle cams and Carrillo conrods came from America to confirm that the world of classic racing has no boundaries regarding distance.

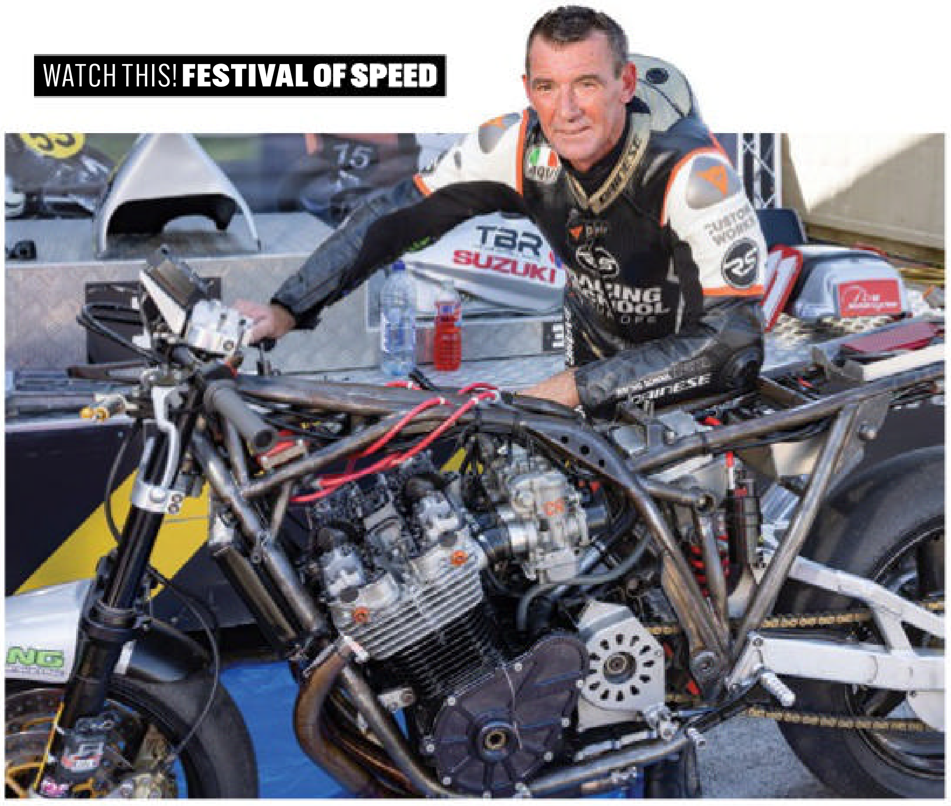
MICHAEL BERTI MENDEZ

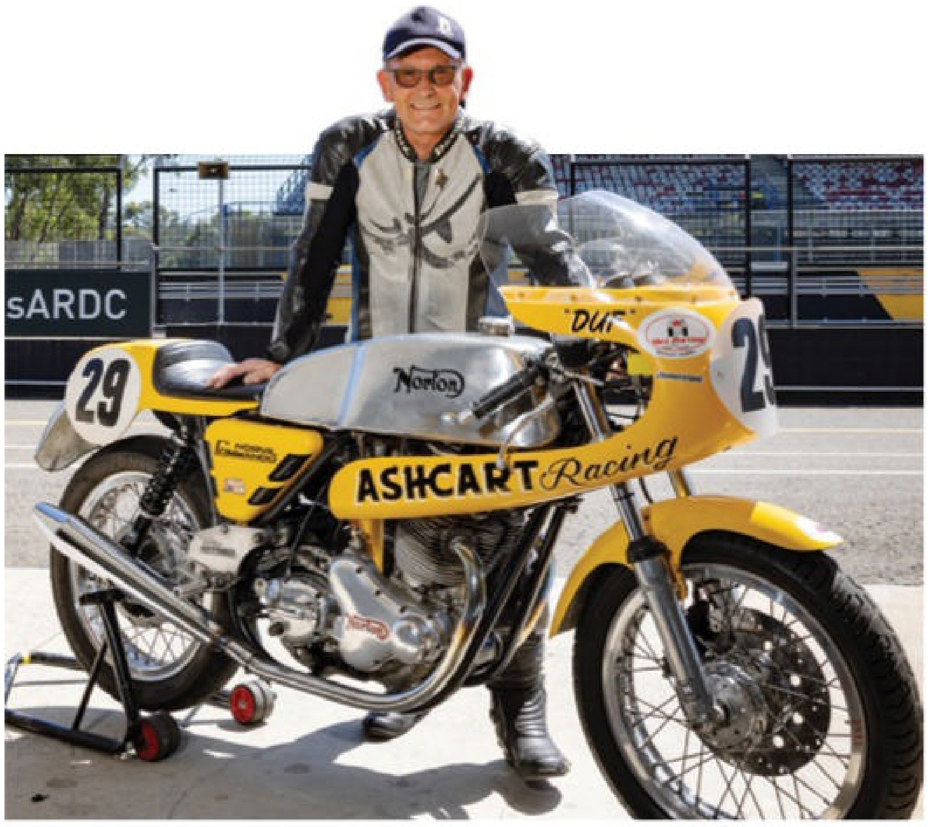
1982 DUCATI TT2 992CC

Ducati's TT2, with its high-revving 600cc engine and 7kg frame, was described in Europe at the time as being a "four-stroke grand prix racer". However, Australian tuners got obsessed about increasing capacity to around 1000cc to make it more competitive against Japanese four-cylinder Superbikes. Owner Jim Knight is a long-time associate of legendary Ducati tuner Arthur Davis, who since 2000 has operated Desmo HQ in Byron Bay.

To recreate a version of what Davis achieved in the 1980s, the pair combined parts from several Ducati air-cooled models. The Pantah cases contain a 71.5mm crankshaft from a DS 1100cc engine, while 900cc Monster barrels are overbored to achieve 94mm. This required moving the engine studs and adding strengthening internal welding. A 750 Paso clutch housing contains a 749 dry slipper clutch while the six-speed, close-ratio gearbox is from a Monster 800.

Rider Michael Berti Mendez hadn't raced for 16 years, but a career that involved Daytona, world Supersport and African desert enduros meant he was soon up to speed. Sadly, when track temperatures hit 68°C the rear cylinder nipped up. Mendez was then put on a 750cc version and won the Period 5 F750 class and finished fourth overall in the P5 1300cc class.





TROY CORSER

UNCHAINED FORMULA ONE SUZUKI KATANA

Australia's two-time world Superbike champion Troy Corser appears to be heading into a new career. In last year's final round of the ASBK title at The Bend, he turned up unexpectedly to race a Honda RC30 in the Superbike Masters support class on his 50th birthday. This time out he jumped on the latest version of the Suzuki Katana that was the Aussie bike to beat in the Phillip Island International Challenge.

Bikes like these took on Roger Winfield's UK team of Harris-framed Suzuki F1s with lead rider Jeremy McWilliams. Owner Les Corish has big plans for what is shaping up to be a new era for this class of bike. Rather than twin shocks, the Katana employs an F1-type monoshock swingarm similar to that used on Neville Hiscock's New Zealand-built Katana in the 1980s. The engine has been supplied by ex-drag racer Trevor Birrell, while Dale Gilbert has built yet another one of his trick frames.

Corish can't give enough credit to Matty McKinnon, who built the bike. After fixing a blown engine cover gasket, a "five-cent spring" in the gearbox failed after Corser had won the first race. Corish, as usual, had a Plan B. Ex-Superbike racer Greg Avery delivered the Period 5 Unlimited trophy on a twin-shock Katana. Corser was unfazed and said he would return.

DAVID 'DUFF' WOOLSEY

1972 NORVIL COMMANDO 750

An early convert to classic racing in the UK in the early 1980s, Duff Woolsey emigrated to Australia 20 years ago with a Seeley G50 to continue the sport he loves. Little did he realise that a chance meeting would see him reunited with one of his first racebikes some 30 years later. The Norvil was making its race return at the festival and Woolsey was bursting with enthusiasm, despite the extremely hot track conditions playing havoc with tyre pressures.

"As well as getting the Commando back I got involved again with a lot of old mates who came out and helped me assemble it," he said. "I can still remember the fun times in those early days, like when I found myself leading a race in the wet at Brands Hatch for the first time ever and started asking myself 'what do I do now?'."

The Commando was assembled from parts and, after an early huge engine blow-up, was rebuilt with a Nourish one-piece steel crank balanced to reduce vibrations at higher revs, Carrillo conrods, a Combat-spec head running 33mm Amal concentric carbs, a PW3 camshaft, five-speed Quaife gear cluster and Newby clutch and belt drive. Handling is helped with an underframe brace, the isolastic chassis rubbers being wound up tight, and a UK Maxton front fork conversion using modern supersport-style internals.

AUSTRALIA'S TWO-TIME WORLD SUPERBIKE CHAMPION TROY CORSER APPEARS TO BE HEADING INTO A NEW CAREER

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1. Beau Beaton and Aaron Morris in the Unchained Formula 1 class

2. Phillip Bevan (#151) waits on his immaculate Honda VFR750 for the start of the Pre Modern Superbike race

3. Lindsay Russell adjusts his Yamaha 125

4. Geoffrey Martin (#6) leads Terry Morris (#14M), Colin Waltho (#110) and a freight train of riders

STEPHEN KAIRL/
PETER WARD

ARMSTRONG ROTAX CM35 250CC

If you are looking for grand prix heritage from the early 1980s you can't go past an Armstrong CM35. First produced in 1981 by UK firm CCM, it made an immediate impression at both the Isle of Man TT and in several GP races. Its water-cooled, twin-cylinder, 247cc two-stroke engine was fitted to a tubular space frame that featured rising-rate rear suspension and the best Marzocchi front fork and Brembo disc brakes available at the time.

Peter Ward, highly regarded among the NSW classic racing fraternity, literally stumbled across his first Armstrong when he was unexpectedly offered a rough example at a race meeting. At the time he was up to his neck in various TZ Yamahas but soon changed his allegiances and at one stage owned three, including a carbon-framed version raced in the Swann Series by Niall Mackenzie in the mid-1980s.

"I'd never seen one until I pulled it apart," he said. "My thoughts were that it was so different we'd better have a play with it." The end result was a lap record set at Eastern Creek in 2010 that is still unbroken. As well as the Armstrong, Stephen Kairl rode in three other classes on bikes ranging from 125cc to 1000cc.

THOMAS
DUNSTER

EARLY-1950S VELOCETTE MAC 350

The Dunsters are keeping it all in the family, with son Thomas taking over the controls of a Velocette his father Peter has raced since the early 1990s. The frame is believed to be one of four that Aussie Velocette racer-tuner Don Cameron built in the early 1950s. Peter describes it as being "a 7/8th scale of a Norton featherbed".

The frame layout was designed to move the engine farther forward to improve racetrack handling. Peter has a photograph of one of the four Cameron creations being raced at Sydney's long-gone Mount Druitt circuit looking much like this one. MAC Velocettes in capacities of 250cc and 350cc were the backbone of domestic racing back then. Conversion to methanol allowed higher compression while keeping the single-cylinder engine cooler. Peter acquired the little racer in the late 1980s when classic racing was starting to boom and he won a NSW title on it. Now Thomas, who has a background in dirtbikes, is running at the front of the field. However, a decline in entries in these earlier classes means combined grids covering several periods. Peter laments this situation as well as the mechanical knowledge being lost as older participants retire.

④

EVENTS. YOUR SOCIAL LISTINGS

TOP THREE TV

① 2023 MotoGP, Rd2, LIVE

Fox Sports, Kayo & Video Pass

31 MARCH-2 APRIL

Check website and local guides

Following the excitement of Portugal's season opener, the MotoGP title now heads to Argentina for the start of two flyaways which could set the tone for the rest of the season.

② 2023 BSB, Rd1

Fox Sports

8-9 APRIL

Check website and local guides

One of the world's most competitive national Superbike series cranks up for another year, with Aussies Josh Brookes (BMW) and Jason O'Halloran (Yamaha) among the leading lights. A multitude of Aussies will also compete in the major BSB support classes.

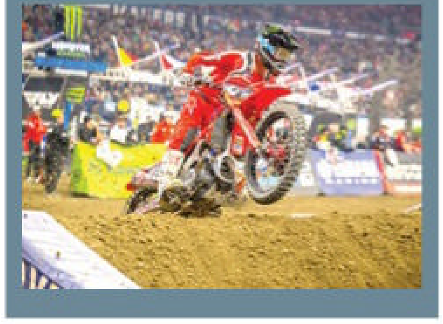
③ 2023 AMA SX, Rd 12, LIVE

Fox Sports, Kayo & Video Pass

9 APRIL

Check website and local guides

We're now well into the second half of the season, with Cooper Webb and Eli Tomac the pacesetters in the 450 class, while the gun Lawrence siblings - Jett and Hunter - are taking all before them in the two 250 titles.



RACING WHERE & WHEN

ROAD RACING

2023 MOTOGP WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd2	2 Apr, Termas de Rio Hondo, AR
Rd3	16 Apr, Austin, US
Rd4	30 Apr, Jerez, ES
Rd5	14 May, Le Mans, FR
Rd6	11 Jun, Mugello, IT
Rd7	18 Jun, Sachsenring, DE
Rd8	25 Jun, Assen, NL
Rd9	9 Jul, Sokol, KZ
Rd10	6 Aug, Silverstone, GB
Rd11	20 Aug, Spielberg, AT
Rd12	3 Sep, Barcelona, ES
Rd13	10 Sep, Misano, IT
Rd14	24 Sep, Buddh, IN
Rd15	1 Oct, Motegi, JN
Rd16	15 Oct, Mandalika, ID
Rd17	22 Oct, Phillip Island, AU
Rd18	29 Oct, Buriram, TH
Rd19	12 Nov, Sepang, MY
Rd20	19 Nov, Losail, QA
Rd21	26 Nov, Valencia, ES

2023 AUSTRALIAN SUPERBIKE CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd3	28-30 Apr, Queensland Raceway, Qld
Rd4	16-18 Jun, Hidden Valley, NT
Rd5	14-16 Jul, Morgan Park Raceway, Qld
Rd6	27-29 Oct, Phillip Island, Vic
Rd7	1-3 Dec, The Bend, SA

2023 SUPERBIKE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd3	21-23 Apr, Assen, NL
Rd4	5-7 May, Barcelona, ES
Rd5	2-4 Jun, Misano, IT
Rd6	30 Jun-2 Jul, Donington Park, GB
Rd7	28-20 Jul, Most, CZ
Rd8	8-10 Sep, Magny-Cours, FR
Rd9	22-24 Sep, Aragon, ES
Rd10	29-Sep-1 Oct, Portimao, PT
Rd11	13-15 Oct, San Juan, AR
Rd12	TBA

2023 BRITISH SUPERBIKE CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd1	8-9 Apr, Silverstone, NTH
Rd2	30 Apr-1 May, Oulton Park, CHS
Rd3	20-21 May, Donington Park, LCE
Rd4	17-18 Jun, Knockhill, FIF
Rd5	8-9 Jul, Snetterton, NFK
Rd6	22-23 Jul, Brands Hatch (GP), KEN
Rd7	12-13 Aug, Thruxton, HAM
Rd8	27-28 Aug, Cadwell Park, LIN
Rd9	16-17 Sep, Oulton Park, CHS
Rd10	30 Sep-1 Oct, Donington Park (GP), LCE
Rd11	14-15 Oct, Brands Hatch (GP), KEN

OFF-ROAD RACING

2023 AUSTRALIAN HARD ENDURO CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd2	13-14 May, 'Mother of Mayhem', Vic
Rd3	24-25 Jun, 'Ironstone Extreme', Qld
Rd4	12-13 Aug, 'Hillstorm Challenge', NSW
Rd5	7-8 Oct, 'Goldfields Extreme', Qld

2023 AUSTRALIAN OFF-ROAD CHAMPIONSHIP

Rds3/4	22-23 Apr, Queensland Moto Park, Qld
Rds5/6	22-23 Jul, Edenhope, Vic
Rds7/8	26-27 Aug, Keyneton, SA
Rds9/10	16-17 Sep, Kyogle, NSW
Rds11/12	14-15 Oct, Dungog, Qld

2023 AUSTRALIAN JUNIOR MX CHAMPIONSHIP

11-16 Jul, Alice Springs, NT

2023 CONDO 750

31 Mar-2 Apr, Condobolin, NSW

2023 FINKE DESERT RACE

9-12 Jun, Alice Springs, NT

2023 HATTAH DESERT RACE

30 Jun-2 Jul, Hattah, Vic

2023 AUSTRALIAN JNR. DIRT TRACK CHAMPIONSHIP

15-16 Jul, Barleigh Ranch, NSW

2023 AUSTRALIAN SNR DIRT TRACK CHAMPIONSHIP

7-8 Oct, Diamond Park, Vic

2023 AUSTRALIAN JUNIOR TRACK CHAMPIONSHIP

15-16 Apr, Arundel, Qld

2023 AUSTRALIAN SENIOR TRACK CHAMPIONSHIP

28-29 Oct, Barleigh Ranch, NSW

2023 AUSTRALIAN FLAT TRACK NATIONALS

Rds1/2	1-2 Jul, Appin, NSW
Rds3/4	16-17 Sep, Brisbane, Qld
Rds5/6	11-12 Nov, Taree, NSW

2023 AMA SX

Rd12	9 Apr, Glendale, AZ
Rd13	16 Apr, Atlanta, GA
Rd14	23 Apr, East Rutherford, NJ
Rd15	30 Apr, Nashville, TN
Rd16	7 May, Denver, CO
Rd17	14 May, Salt Lake City, UT

2023 WSX

Rd1	1 Jul, Birmingham, GB
Rd2	22 Jul, Lyon, FR
Rd3	30 Sep, TBA, SE Asia
Rd4	14 Oct, Dusseldorf, DE
Rd5	28 Oct, Vancouver, CA
Rd6	24-25 Nov, Melbourne, AU

2023 MOTOCROSS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd3	8/10 Apr, Frauenfeld, CH
Rd4	16 Apr, Pietramurata, IT
Rd5	30 Apr, Agueda, PT
Rd6	7 May, Arroyomolinos, ES
Rd7	21 May, Villars sous Ecot, FR
Rd8	4 Jun, Kegums, LV
Rd9	11 Jun, Teutschenthal, DE
Rd10	25 Jun, Sumbawa, ID
Rd11	2 Jul, Lombok, ID
Rd12	16 Jul, Loket, CZ
Rd13	23 Jul, Lommel, BE
Rd14	30 Jul, Hyvinkaa, FI
Rd15	13 Aug, Uddevalla, SE
Rd16	20 Aug, Arnhem, NL
Rd17	3 Sep, Afyonkarahisar, TR
Rd18	17 Sep, Thanh Hoa, VN
Rd19	15 Oct, Matterley Basin, GB

2023 MOTOCROSS OF NATIONS

22 Oct, Ernee, FR

2023 JUNIOR MOTOCROSS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

9Jul, Bucharest, RO

2023 ENDUROGP WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP*

Rd1	31 Mar-2 Apr, San Remo, IT
Rd2	5-7 May, Lalin, ES
Rd3	26-28 May, Heinola, FI
Rd4	1-3 Jun, Skövde, SE
Rd5	30 Jun-2 Jul, Gelnica, SK
Rd6	7-9 Jul, TBA
Rd7	29 Sep-1 Oct, Valpaços, PT
Rd8	6-8 Oct, St Andre, PT

2023 HARD ENDURO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd1	17-20 May, XCross, RS
Rd2	8-11 Jun, Erzbergrodeo, AT
Rd3	7-9 Jul, Abestone, IT
Rd4	25-29 Jul, Romaniacs, RO
Rd5	26-27 Aug, Outliers, CA
Rd6	28-20 Sep, Roof of Africa, LS
Rd7	3-4 Nov, GetZen Rodeo, DE

2023 SPEEDWAY GRAND PRIX

Rd1	29 Apr, Donji Kraljevec, HR
Rd2	13 May, Warsaw, PL
Rd3	3 Jun, Prague, CZ
Rd4	10 Jun, Teterow, DE
Rd5	24 Jun, Gorzow, PL
Rd6	23 July, Malilla, SE
Rd7	12 Aug, Riga, LV
Rd8	2 Sep, Cardiff, GB
Rd9	16 Sep, Vojens, DK
Rd10	30 Sep, Torun, PL

2023 TRIAL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd1	14-16 Apr, Arteixo, ES
Rd2	21-23 Apr, Gouveia, PT
Rd3	19-21 May, Motegi, JP
Rd4	09-11 Jun, Baldasserrona, SM
Rd5	16-18 Jun, Sant Julià de Lòria, AD
Rd6	21-23 Jul, Sestriere, IT
Rd7	01-03 Sep, Vertolaye, FR

2023 WOMEN'S TRIAL WORLD CHMPIONSHIP

Rd1	14-16 Apr, Arteixo ES
Rd2	21-23 Apr, Gouveia, PT
Rd3	19-21 May, Motegi, JP
Rd4	21-23 Jul, Sestriere, IT
Rd5	1-3 Sep, Vertolay, FR

2023 ICE SPEEDWAY WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Final	1-2 Apr, Heerenveen, NL

RIDE DAYS & SCHOOLS

Phillip Island Ride Days / 0490 281 840
Phillip Island, Vic

Sydney Motorsport Park Ride Days/0490 281 840
SMSP, NSW

Murray Valley Training Co 0459 415 787
Barnawartha North, Vic

Champion's Ride Days (07) 3287 4144
Broadford, Vic
Collie Motorplex, WA
Morgan Park, Qld
The Bend, SA

Trakdayz 0401 484 898
Barbagallo, WA

California Superbike School / 1300 793 423
Phillip Island, Vic
SMSP, NSW
Broadford, Vic
Morgan Park Qld

Mount Gambier MCC Coaching / Ride Days 0448 951 163
Mac Park, SA

Ride-Tek MTA 1300 788 382
Sandown, Vic

Ridedays WA (08) 9409 1002
Barbagallo, WA
Collie, WA

Top Rider 1300 131 362
Various venues, Qld

Phoenix MCC Junior Coaching 0403 386 788
Tailem Bend, SA
Mallala, SA

RALLIES & SHOWS

16 APRIL 2023

Mirboo North Motorcycle Swap Meet Castle Street Oval, Mirboo North (Vic). Coffee and barbecue on site, and entry is $10 per person. Gates open at 6:30am for setup. For more information on the bi-annual event, tel 0428 684 267, look up 'mirboo north motorcycle show' on Facebook or email mirboo.n.motorcycle.show@outlook.com.

6 MAY 2023

Dubbo Motorbike Rally Dubbo, NSW. From Harleys to Hondas, Buells to Beemers and Piaggios to posties – all bikes and riders welcome. The event will be held in Talbragar Street from 9am to 4pm (you can park in 'Bike Street' any time, for as long as you like, during this period). Just don't leave your ride at the motel, as everyone else wants to see it too! There will be stalls, entertainment, local rides and much more. For more information see the event website at dubbomotorbikerally.com.

6-7 MAY 2023

Gloucester Motorcycle Expo, Gloucester Showground, Gloucester, NSW. Vintage MX racing, show 'n' shine, dealer displays, swap meet, prizes, bar facilities, cafe, free camping, hot showers, food, firewood and live music Saturday night. Entry $20 adults, $40 family and U16 free. For more information phone Peter Markey on 0418 633 060 or Sam DeWitte on 0417 656 201.

7 MAY 2023

The Berry Bike Show, Berry Bowling Club, NSW. Trophies, stalls, raffles, sausage sizzle. Registration 8:30am-midday, judging 12.30pm. Entry $5 per bike, public entry gold coin donation. Judging categories: Classic European, Classic British, Classic Asian, Classic American, Modified, Ladies, Kids, Modern, Dirt/Trail Bike, Sidecar, Oldest Bike, Unrestored, Bike of The Show.

18-21 MAY 2023

The 37th Bike Fest International, Lignano Sabbiadoro, Italy. The BFI has many attractions: a 7km area for off-road activities, moto tours, demo rides, rock music, cuisines galore, custom machines, a custom show, and a massive parade. Entry is free. For more information, visit the 'Biker Fest International' Facebook site.

20-21 MAY 2023

Great Southern Adventure Rally, location TBA, SA (north of Adelaide). Start at 10.30am; stands up at 11.30am. An adventure event focused on fun and teamwork. Anyone on a street-legal bike over 150cc can join in on the action. Teams of at least two, but you are welcome to join up with any other teams on the day. One Twitter account required per team, bring water. For details and registration visit www.greatsouthernadventurerally.com.au.

27-28 MAY 2023

Historic Winton, Winton, Vic. The 46th car and motorcycle event will be held in its usual spectacular style with races, displays, trade stalls, a Sunday parade and delicious food. Camping tickets are available at the website www.ticketebo.com.au/historicwinton. For the latest Historic Winton news visit www.historicwinton.org or follow on Facebook or Instagram @historicwinton.

7-11 JUNE 2023

Bike Fest Oz in Coolangatta and surrounds is shaping up to be Australia's version of Sturgis or Daytona Bike Week. Events include the Rolling Thunder Parade, poker run, beach rides, opening ball and a concert and party. Early-bird packages are available for $500 and get you into the Thunder Parade, guaranteed access to the accomodation packages and other limited ticketed events, a tourist info pack, a T-shirt and a bumper sticker. For more information check out bikefestoz.com.au.

11 JUNE 2023

Border Swap Meet, Tweed Heads, NSW. To be held at Recreation Street Park in Florence Street. Gates open for vendors at 5am. For details shoot an email through to contactsecretary.thmcec@gmail.com or call the club on 0404 222 422.

23-25 JUNE 2023

Casper Rally, on the Abercrombie River at the Bummaroo Ford Camping Ground in NSW. The rally site is located approximately 72km north of Goulburn and 75km south of Oberon. BYO drinks, food and cooking gear. Toilet facilities on site with drinking water and firewood provided. Raffle and awards Saturday afternoon. Entry is $20 and includes a badge and raffle ticket. Enquiries: Andy 0437 608 440 or Dieter 0417 616 199.

24 JUNE 2023

All Bike Day, Tweed Heads, NSW. Willowbank Raceway, Qld. For all skill levels, in classes from LAMS to cruisers to full-spec modified bikes. It is run on a 'dial your own' format. Entries will be online through the Willowbank Raceway website about a month before the race date. Contact Marty Armstrong on 0424 134 904 for more information.

16 JULY 2023

Club Laverda Councours, Redland Showgrounds, Cleveland, Qld. A static motorcycle display with 60 trophies and $2000 for the best machine. Alcohol-free family day raising funds for the Make a Wish Foundation. A $10 gate fee applies to patrons over 15 years and includes on-site motorcycle parking. Entertainment includes free face painting and kids' rides; wide variety of food vendors. For information call 0404 540 617 or email concours@clublaverdaqld.com.au.

26-28 AUGUST 2023

TTT Rally, follow red and white TTT signs 10km north of Taralga, NSW. An overnight ride, with camping and a huge bonfire. BYO everything else. Badge $25 on the day. The TTT Rally (Thrashers Terrifying Trek) is a favourite of the Clubman Tourers. For details visit www.clubman.org.au.

8-10 SEPTEMBER 2023

Ragged Fringe Rally, Bretti Reserve, NSW. Annual rally for the Moto Guzzi Club NSW. Firewood will be provided by the club and rally badges and T-shirts will be available for purchase. Entry fee is $30. The rally officially starts on Saturday morning however many choose to arrive on the Friday. There will be a number of meeting points for group rides to the rally on either day. See www.mgoa.org.

19 SEPTEMBER 2023

31st Annual Border Poker Run Tweed Heads, NSW. All makes and models welcome. Make sure you keep an eye on the 'Tweed Heads Motorcycle Enthusiasts Club' Facebook page as more information comes to hand.

22-24 SEPTEMBER 2023

Harley-Davidson National HOG Rally, The Bend Motorsport Park, Tailem Bend, SA. Highlights will include night drags, bagger racing, private track sessions, a chapter parade and test-ride sessions. There will be live music, interactive tech displays, chapter games, guided rides and a host of vendors. The event marks the pinnacle of year-long celebrations as the brand commemorates 120 years and 40 years of HOG in Australia. For information and ticketing see www.hog120.com or socials at @harleyaustralia.

27-29 OCTOBER 2023

Spaghetti Rally Edi Cutting (South) campsite in the beautiful King Valley, not far from Whitfield, Vic. Spit roast available Friday night, egg and bacon rolls both Saturday and Sunday mornings, and, of course, Spaghetti dinner Saturday night included in entry fee. The usual trophies and awards after the traditional motorcycle trivia quiz. Hosted by Moto Guzzi Club of Victoria. For more information contact John Ferguson at johnferguson@iinet.net.au or call 0408 32 0511.

3-9 NOVEMBER 2023

BSA Motorcycle International Rally in Harndorf, SA. Six days of good company, great riding with panoramic views of beautiful countryside, as well as superb local produce included in all meals. A fun way to get together like-minded people who have an interest in firing up their British motorcycles, and also to catch up with old and new friends in a relaxed atmosphere. See

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06
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🖱 whitesmoto.com.au

The Richa Atlantic jacket features a laminated two-layer Gore-Tex outer fabric for weather protection, D3O protection along the back, shoulders and elbows, Gore-Tex Armacor in key areas, a connection zipper, waterproof side pockets and back pocket, and a neoprene collar. Available in sizes S-5XL.

② FEET FREEDOM

Moto National

$249.95

☎ (07) 3120 4228

🖱 falcoboots.com.au

The Falco Liberty 3 boot features a Micro-Synth upper and High-Tex membrane. In addition, it has ventilated "Air-Tech" textile inserts, toe and heel reinforcements, D3O-backed ankle cups, PU-moulded gear pad, rear reflective piping, and a high-grip textured touring sole. Available in black in sizes 36-47.

③ IN MY PRIME

Monza Imports

From $289.99

☎ 1300 466 692

🖱 monzaimports.com.au

The Alpinestars Primer ride shoe features a nubuck leather and open-cell polyurethane construction with EVA protection providing extra durability in the gearshift area. The Primer is CE certified and boasts a casual last for all-day comfort, oil-resistant dual compound rubber sole, and lace-up closure.

4
JET
Barkbusters
SUPER ADVENTURE

4 BUSTED!

Barkbusters

$154.95

☎ (02) 4271 8244

barkbusters.net

Barkbusters has developed handguard kits to suit MY2021+ KTM 1290 Super Adventure R and S models. The new kits include full aluminium wraparound frames that mount at two points, and they come with all mounting hardware. The frames are compatible with the brand's Jet, VPS, Storm and Carbon guards.

5 ROAD & TRACK

Link International

From $299.95/$349.95

☎ (07) 3382 5000

pirellimoto.com.au

The new Pirelli Supercorsa V4 is available in SC (track) and SP (road) compounds in a variety of sizes, and has been developed through the tyre manufacturer's experience in WorldSBK competition. It features dual compounds on the front and rear for maximum grip and outstanding thrust out of turns.

6 BURNING MAN

Cassons Australia

$429.95

☎ (02) 8882 1900

cassonsmedia.com

The laminated Ixon Burning jacket has XDRY membrane integrated into the outer waterproof, breathable material. It has taped seams, a removable thermal liner, shoulder and elbow protectors, zippered vents, a removable hood and more. Sizes S-6XL in black, navy and tactic green.

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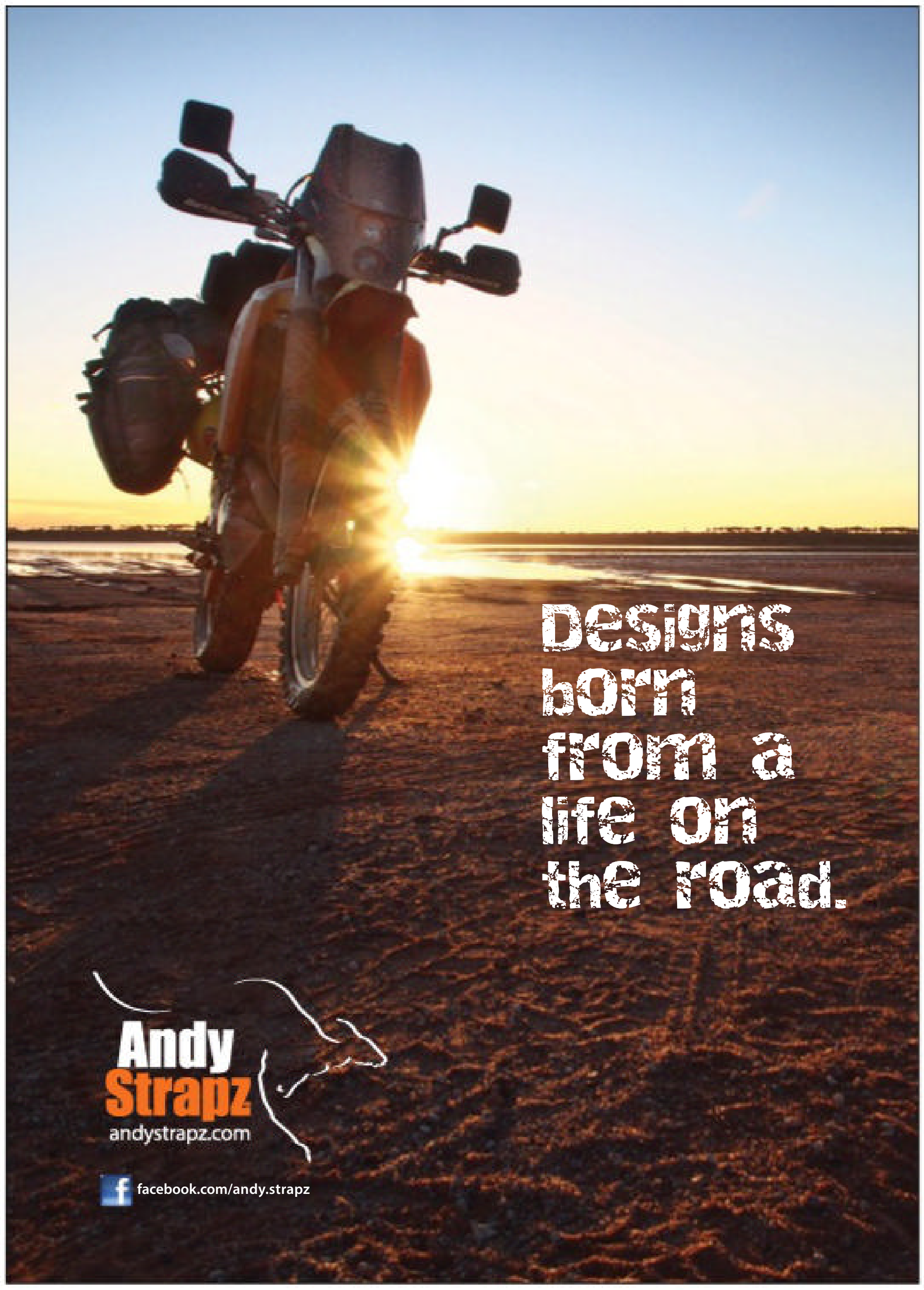
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BUYER'S GUIDE. A-Z OF NEW BIKE PRICES

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
APRILIA aprilia.com.au		
All prices are ride away		
SR GT 125	$7440	✓
SR GT 125 Sport	$7540	✓
RS 660	$21,230	✓
RS 660 LAMS	$20,830	✓
Tuono 660	$20,430	✗
Tuono 660 LAMS	$20,530	✓
Tuareg 660	$22,230	✗
Tuareg 660 LAMS	$22,230	✓
Tuono V4	$28,830	✗
Tuono Factory	$33,330	✗
RSV4	$31,830	✗
RSV4 Factory	$38,930	✗
BENELLI benelli.com.au		
All prices are ride away		
TnT 135 CBS	$4590	✓
TRK 502	$9990	✓
TRK 502 X	$10,690	✓
Leoncino 500	$9890	✓
Leoncino 500 Trail	$10,390	✓
Leoncino 800	$13,490	✗
Leoncino 800 Trail	$13,990	✗
502C	$10,590	✓
752S	$12,990	✗
TNT 600i	$11,790	✓
BETA betamotor.com.au		
Plus on-road costs		
RR 125 2T	$12,295	✓
RR 200 2T	$13,395	✓
RR 250 2T	$13,595	✓
RR 300 2T	$14,395	✓
RR 350 4T EFI	$14,195	✓
RR 390 4T EFI	$14,495	✓
RR 430 4T EFI	$14,695	✓
RR 480 4T EFI	$14,995	✓
X-Trainer 250 2T	$11,195	✓
X-Trainer 300 2T	$11,495	✓
BMW bmwmotorrad.com.au		
Plus on-road costs (from August 2022 production)		
F 900 XR	$18,670	✗
F 900 R	$15,320	✗
S 1000 XR	$29,780	✗
M 1000 RR	$52,440	✗
S 1000 RR	$25,750	✗
R 1250 RS	$27,240	✗
R 1250 RT	$37,840	✗
K 1600 GT	$42,820	✗
K 1600 GTL	$44,520	✗
K 1600 B	$42,820	✗
K 1600 Grand America	$44,290	✗
G 310 R	$7990	✓
F 900 R	$15,420	✗
S 1000 R	$22,090	✗
M 1000 R	$32,290	✗
R 1250 R	$26,320	✗
R 18	$23,140	✗
R 18 Classic	$25,840	✗
R 18 B Deluxe	$35,400	✗
R 18 Transcontinental	$37,940	✗
R nineT	$25,490	✗
R nineT Pure	$20,210	✗
R nineT Scrambler	$21,410	✗
R nineT Urban G/S	$21,260	✗
G 310 GS	$8390	✓
F 750 GS	$17,945	✗
F 850 GS	$22,005	✗
F 850 GS Adventure	$23,830	✗
R 1250 GS	$31,320	✗
R 1250 GS Adventure	$33,305	✗
C 400 GT	$11,740	✓
C 400 X	$10,490	✓
CE 04	$21,900	✓
BRP au.brp.com		
All prices are ride away		
Ryker 600	$15,199	✓
Ryker 900	$17,749	✗
Ryker Rally 900	$19,799	✗
Spyder F3 S	$31,149	✗
Spyder F3 LTD	$35,699	✗
Spyder RT LTD	$41,449	✗
CFMOTO cfmoto.com.au		
All prices are ride away		
150NK	$4290	✓
300NK	$5490	✓
300SR	$6290	✓
650MT	$8290	✓
650GT	$8490	✓
650NK	$8290	✓
700CL-X Heritage	$9490	✗
700CL-X Sport	$10,490	✗
800MT Sport	$12,990	✗
800MT Touring	$14,490	✗
DUCATI ducati.com.au		
All prices are ride away		
Multistrada V4	$30,800	✗
Multistrada V4 S	$35,000	✗
Multistrada V4 S Sport	$42,900	✗
Multistrada V4 Pikes Peak	$45,000	✗
Multistrada V2	$23,200	✗
Multistrada V2 S	$25,700	✗
DesertX	$24,700	✗
Hypermotard 950	$23,100	✗
Hypermotard 950 RVE	$24,700	✗
Hypermotard 950 SP	$28,900	✗
Streetfighter V2	$23,200	✗
Streetfighter V4	$32,400	✗
Streetfighter V4 S	$37,000	✗
Streetfighter V4 SP	$48,400	✗
Monster	$19,200	✗
Monster+	$19,800	✗
Monster SP	$23,200	✗
Monster 659	$13,500	✓
Supersport	$20,900	✗
Supersport S	$23,200	✗
Scrambler Urban Motard	$18,900	✗
Scrambler Icon	$15,600	✗
Scrambler Icon Dark	$14,900	✗
Scrambler Desert Sled	$20,000	✗
Scrambler Nightshift	$18,300	✗
Scrambler 1100 Dark PRO	$19,100	✗
Scrambler 1100 PRO	$20,390	✗
Scrambler 1100 Tribute Pro	$21,300	✗
Scrambler 1100 Sport PRO	$24,200	✗
Panigale V4	$34,700	✗
Panigale V4 S	$43,900	✗
Panigale V4 SP2	$56,900	✗
Panigale V2	$24,900	✗
Diavel 1260	$32,800	✗
Diavel 1260 S	$38,400	✗
Diavel V4	$41,100	✗
XDiavel Dark	$31,800	✗
XDiavel S	$38,900	✗
XDiavel Nera	$44,900	✗
ENERGICA australianelectricmotorco.com/energica-motorcycles		
Plus on-road costs		
Experia	$48,164	✗
Ego	$41,725	✗
Ego+	$52,233	✗
Ego+ RS	$55,329	✗
Ribelle	$50,374	✗
Ribelle RS	$52,470	✗
Esseesse9	$35,478	✗
Esseesse9+	$46,563	✗
GASGAS gasgasaustralia.com.au		
All prices are ride away		
EC250	$15,599	✓
EC250F	$15,599	✓
EC300	$17,069	✓
EC350F	$16,659	✓
SM 700	$19,105	✓
ES 700	$19,105	✓
H-D harley-davidson.com.au		
All prices are ride away		
Softail Standard	$22,995	✗
Nightster	$23,995	✗
Street Bob 114	$26,250	✗
Sport Glide	$29,750	✗
Low Rider S	$30,750	✗
Low Rider ST	$35,250	✗
Fat Bob 114	$31,750	✗
Heritage Classic 114	$36,250	✗
Fat Boy 114	$36,250	✗
Breakout 114	$36,250	✗
Road King Special	$39,495	✗
Road Glide Special	$41,995	✗
Road Glide ST	$44,995	✗
Sportster S	$26,495	✗
Street Glide Special	$41,995	✗
Street Glide ST	$44,995	✗
Ultra Limited	$43,995	✗
Freewheeler	$49,250	✗
Tri Glide Ultra	$59,250	✗
CVO Street Glide	$58,250	✗
CVO Road Glide	$58,750	✗
CVO Limited	$61,750	✗
CVO Tri Glide	$76,250	✗
Pan America 1250S	$33,495	✗
HONDA hondamotorcycles.com.au		
Plus on-road costs		
GL1800 Goldwing DCT	$41,999	✗
GL1800 Goldwing Tour Prem DCT	$49,999	✗
NT1100	$21,690	✗
NT1100D DCT	$22,699	✗
CBR1000RR-R SP	$52,999	✗
CBR650R	$12,099	✓
CBR600RR	$27,599	✗

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MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
CBR500R	$9999	✓
CB125E	$2869	✓
Grom	$4249	✓
Monkey	$6649	✓
CB500F	$9499	✓
CB650R	$11,499	✓
CB300R	$7199	✓
CMX1100 DCT	$19,649	×
CMX1100	$18,549	×
CMX500	$9149	✓
NSS350A Forza	$9549	✓
ADV150	$6149	✓
PCX150	$5299	✓
C125 Super Cub	$7378	✓
CT125	$7449	✓
NSC110 Dio	$3349	✓
MW110 Benly	$3999	✓
CRF1100 Africa Twin	$22,999	×
CRF1100 Africa Twin AS	$26,199	×
CRF1100 Africa Twin AS DCT	$27,199	×
CRF1100 Africa Twin AS DCT ES	$29,499	×
CRF300LRA Rally	$9199	✓
CB500XA	$9949	✓
CRF300LA	$7999	✓
AG-XR	$5399	✓

HUSQVARNA husqvarnamotorcycles.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Vitpilen 401	$7975	✓
Svartpilen 401	$7975	✓
FS450	$16,625	✓
701 Supermoto	$19,490	×
701 Enduro	$19,490	×
2022 TE 150i	$14,735	✓
2023 TE 150i	$14,959	✓
2022 TE 250i	$16,520	✓
2023 TE 250i	$16,789	✓
2022 TE 300i	$18,025	✓
2023 TE 300i	$18,379	✓
2022 FE 250	$16,520	✓
2023 FE 250	$16,789	✓
2022 FE 350	$17,610	✓
2023 FE 350	$17,929	✓
2022 FE 450	$18,025	✓
2023 FE 450	$18,269	✓
2022 FE 501	$18,655	✓
2023 FE 501	$18,929	✓
Norden 901	$25,050	×

INDIAN indianmotorcycle.com.au

All Indian prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Scout Bobber	$23,995	×
Scout Bobber Twenty	$24,495	×
Scout	$24,995	×
Scout Rogue	$25,995	×
Chief Dark Horse	$28,995	×
Chief Bobber Dark Horse	$30,495	×
Sport Chief	$32,995	×
Super Chief Limited	$32,995	×
Springfield Dark Horse	$38,995	×
Springfield	$39,495	×
Chieftain Dark Horse	$42,495	×
Chieftain Limited	$42,995	×
Challenger Dark Horse	$43,495	×
Challenger Limited	$43,995	×
Challenger Elite	$51,995	×
Roadmaster Dark Horse	$45,495	×
Roadmaster Limited	$45,995	×
Roadmaster Classic	$46,995	×
Pursuit Dark Horse	$46,995	×
Pursuit Limited	$47,495	×
FTR	$23,995	×
FTR Sport	$25,995	×
FTR Rally	$25,995	×
FTR R Carbon	$27,995	×

KAWASAKI kawasaki.com.au

Plus on-road costs

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Versys-X 300 SE	$7578	✓
Ninja 400 SE	$7713	✓
Ninja 400	$7413	✓
Z400	$7263	✓
Ninja 650L	$11,378	✓
Ninja 650	$11,378	×
Versys 650L	$12,178	✓
Z650L	$11,278	✓
Z650RS	$12,078	✓
W800 Cafe	$14,298	×

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SUZUKI
V-STROM 1050DE

ENGINE	1037cc V-twin
POWER	79kW (107hp)
TORQUE	100Nm
WEIGHT	252kg (kerb)
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BUYER'S GUIDE. A-Z OF NEW BIKE PRICES

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
W800 Street	$13,898	✗
Z900 Supernaked	$13,528	✗
Z900RS	$16,778	✗
Ninja 1000SX	$17,878	✗
Versys 1000 S	$20,978	✗
Z1000	$16,978	✗
Ninja ZX-6R (636) KRT	$16,178	✗
Ninja H2	$38,379	✗
Ninja H2R	$67,299	✗
Ninja H2 SX	$32,379	✗
Ninja ZX-10R	$26,879	✗
Ninja ZX-10RR	$42,379	✗
Z H2	$24,279	✗
Ninja ZX-14R SE	$23,378	✗
Vulcan S	$10,578	✗
Vulcan S LAMS	$10,678	✓
Kawasaki KLX150BF SE	$4763	✓
Kawasaki KLX230	$6463	✓
KLX230SM	$7563	✓
KLX250	$7363	✓
KLX450R	$12,063	✓
KLR650 ABS	$9463	✓
KLR650 ABS Adventure	$10,3463	✓

KTM ktm.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
200 Duke ABS	$5470	✓
390 Duke	$7885	✓
890 Duke	$16,850	✗
890 DukeGP	$17,120	✗
890 Duke R	$19,840	✗
690 SMC R	$19,295	✗
RC 390	$8399	✓
1290 Super Duke R	$29,420	✗
1290 Super Duke R EVO	$32,115	✗
1290 Super Duke GT	$33,165	✗
690 Enduro R	$19,295	✗
390 Adventure	$9970	✓
890 Adventure	$23,400	✗
890 Adventure R	$25,380	✗
1290 Super Adventure S	$31,710	✗
1290 Super Adventure R	$33,265	
2022 150 EXC	$14,175	✓
2023 150 EXC	$14,599	✓
2022 250 EXC	$15,900	✓
2023 250 EXC	$16,399	✓
2022 250 EXC-F	$15,900	✓
2023 250 EXC-F	$16,399	✓
2022 300 EXC TPI	$17,400	✓
2023 300 EXC TPI	$17,879	✓
2022 350 EXC-F	$16,985	✓
2023 350 EXC-F	$17,449	✓
2022 450 EXC-F	$17,300	✓
2023 450 EXC-F	$17,799	✓
2022 500 EXC-F	$17,925	✓
2023 500 EXC-F	$18,419	✓

KYMCO kymco.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Agility 50	$2490	✓
Like 50 4T	$2890	✓
Agility RS 125 CBS	$2990	✓
Agility 16+ 125 (w/ top box)	$3490	✓
Agility 16+ 200i (w/ top box)	$4190	✓
People S 150 (w/ top box)	$5190	✓
Super 8 50 2T	$2790	✓
Like 125 CBS (w/ top box)	$3990	✓
Like 200i (w/ top box)	$3990	✓
Like 150R ABS (w/ top box)	$5290	✓
Like 150 S	$4790	✓
Agility 16+ 300	$6990	✓
Downtown 350i ABS	$8290	✓
DTX360	$8790	✓
Xciting S 400i ABS	$9990	✓
AK550 ABS	$13,490	✓

LAMBRETTA lambrettaaustralia.com.au

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
V50 Special Flex	$3590	✓
V200 Special Flex	$4990	✓

MOTO GUZZI motoguzzi.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
V7 Stone	$18,030	✗
V7 Stone Centenario	$19,030	✗
V7 Special	$18,930	✗
V9 Bobber Centenario	$19,330	✗
V85 TT	$22,230	✗
V85 TT Evocative	$22,830	✗
V85 TT Travel	$24,330	✗
V85 TT Centenario	$22,830	✗

MV AGUSTA mvagusta.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
F3 800 Rosso	$36,990	✗
F3 800 RR	$41,990	✗
Brutale 800 Rosso	$29,990	✗
Brutale 800 RR	$34,990	✗
Brutale 1000 RS	$51,990	✗
Brutale 1000 RR	$63,990	✗
Rush 1000 (+race kit)	$76,880	✗
Dragster 800 Rosso	$32,990	✗
Dragster 800 RR SCS	$37,990	✗
Dragster 800 RC SCS	$41,990	✗
Superveloce 800	$42,990	✗
Superveloce 800 S	$48,990	✗
Superveloce 800 S (+race kit)	$51,590	✗
Turismo Veloce Rosso	$33,990	✗
Turismo Veloce Lusso SCS	$43,990	✗

PEUGEOT peugeotmotorcycles.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Kisbee 50 2T	$2990	✓
Tweet 200	$5790	✓
Tweet 200 GT	$5990	✓
Django 50	$4190	✓
Django 150	$5490	✓
Belville 200 RS	$5990	✓
Metropolis 400	$14,790	✓

PIAGGIO piaggio.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Typhoon 50	$4140	✓
Medley	$6540	✓
Medley S	$6640	✓
Beverly 400 S	$12,440	✓

RIEJU rieju.com.au

Plus on-road costs

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
MR Ranger 200	$12,790	✓
MR Ranger 300	$12,990	✓
MR Racing 250	$13,990	✓
MR Racing 300	$14,290	✓
MR Pro 250	$15,690	✓
MR Pro 300	$15,990	✓

ROYAL ENFIELD royalenfield.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Meteor 350 Fireball	$7890	✓
Meteor 350 Stellar	$8290	✓
Meteor 350 Supernova	$8690	✓
Hunter 350 Dapper	$7590	✓
Hunter 350 Rebel	$7690	✓
Classic 350 Halcyon	$7990	✓
Classic 350 Signals	$8290	✓
Classic 350 Dark	$8690	✓
Classic 350 Chrome	$8790	✓
Scram 411 Base	$8240	✓
Scram 411 Mid	$8340	✓
Scram 411 Premium	$8440	✓
Interceptor 650 Classic	$10,990	✓
Interceptor 650 Custom	$11,290	✓
Interceptor 650 Chrome	$11,590	✓
Continental GT 650 Classic	$10,990	✓
Continental GT 650 Custom	$11,290	✓
Continental GT 650 Chrome	$11,590	✓
Himalayan 410	$8390	✓
Super Meteor 650 Astra Black-Blue	$11,990	✓
Super Meteor 650 Interstellar Green	$12,190	✓
Super Meteor 650 Celestial Blue-Red	$11,290	✓

SHERCO Sherco.com

Plus on-road costs

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
125 SE Factory	$13,499	✓
250 SE Factory	$14,999	✓
300 SE Factory	$15,499	✓
250 SEF Factory	$15,499	✓
300 SEF Factory	$15,999	✓
450 SEF Factory	$16,799	✓
500 SEF Factory	$16,999	✓

SUZUKI suzukimotorcycles.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Address 110	$3890	✓
Avenis 125	$4890	✓
GSX-S125A	$5440	✓
V-Strom 250SX	$6480	✓
V-Strom 650XT	$14,990	✗
V-Strom 650XT LAMS	$14,990	✓
SV650	$11,490	✗
SV650 LAMS	$11,490	✓
GSX-S750	$14,390	✗
2023 GSX-R1000	$24,990	✗
2023 GSX-R1000R	$27,990	✗
GSX-S1000	$17,990	✗
GSX-S1000GT	$19,990	✗
Katana	$21,990	✗
V-Strom 1050DE	$24,690	✗
Hayabusa	$27,790	✗
Boulevard M109R	$21,990	✗
Trojan	$5990	✓
DR-Z400E	$11,390	✓
DR650SE	$10,390	✓

SUPER SOCO supersoco.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
TC - Cafe	$5490	✓
TC Max (alloy wheels)	$7990	✓
TC Max (wire-spoke wheels)	$8290	✓
CUX Scooter	$4990	✓
CUX Scooter - Ducati	$5490	✓

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FACTORY LINE
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MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
CPx Scooter	$7690	✓
CPx Scooter Dual Battery	$9990	✓

SWM
swmmotorcycles.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
RS300R	$8590	✓
RS500R	$9290	✓

SYM SCOOTA
symscooters.com.au

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Crox 50	$2490	✓
Mio 50i	$2890	✓
Classic 125	$2790	✓
Orbit 125	$2790	✓
Orbit II 125i	$3190	✓
Symphony ST200i	$3990	✓
Classic 200i	$4090	✓
HD300i	$6690	✓
GTS300i Sport	$7690	✓

TRIUMPH
triumphmotorcycles.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Speed Twin 900	$16,190	✗
Bonneville T100	$18,290	✗
Scrambler 900	$18,590	✗
Bonneville T120	$20,890	✗
Speed Twin 1200	$21,090	✗
Thruxton RS	$25,990	✗
Bonneville Speedmaster	$22,490	✗
Bonneville Bobber	$22,490	✗
Scrambler 1200 XC	$23,450	✗
Scrambler 1200 XE	$24,890	✗
Rocket 3 R	$34,450	✗
Rocket 3 GT	$35,850	✗
Trident 660 LAMS	$13,150	✓
Street Triple S 660	$14,990	✓
Speed Triple 765 R	$18,140	✗
Street Triple 765 RS	$20,590	✗
Street Triple 765 Moto2 Edition	$25,290	✗
Speed Triple 1200 RS	$28,490	✗
Tiger 850 Sport	$18,250	✗
Tiger 900 GT (and Low)	$21,250	✗
Tiger 900 GT Pro	$24,250	✗
Tiger 900 Rally	$22,390	✗
Tiger 900 Rally Pro	$24,890	✗
Tiger 1200 GT Pro	$29,990	✗
Tiger 1200 Rally Pro	$31,800	✗
Tiger 1200 GT Explorer	$32,600	✗
Tiger 1200 Rally Explorer	$33,950	✗

URAL
ural.com

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
CT	$25,299	✗
Gear Up	$28,599	✗
Sportsman SE	$30,599	✗
Sahara SE	$30,599	✗

VESPA
vespa.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Primavera 50	$6490	✓
Primavera 125 i-Get	$7690	✓
Primavera 150 i-Get	$8490	✓
Primavera 150 S	$8590	✓
Primavera 150 Red	$8990	✓
Primavera 150 SE Picnic	$9040	✓
Primavera 150 75 Anno	$9890	✓
Sprint i-Get	$8590	✓
GTS 150 i-Get	$9590	✓
GTS 300 Super Sport	$12,290	✓
GTS 300 Super Tech	$12,890	✓
GTV 300 'Sei Giorni'	$12,590	✓
GTS 300 75 Anno	$13,590	✓

YAMAHA
yamaha-motor.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
D'elight 125 White	$3849	✓
NMAX 155	$5899	✓
XMAX 300	$9149	✓
TMAX 560	$19,849	✓
XV250 Virago	$8849	✓
YZF-R15	$4999	✓
MT-03	$7849	✓
YZF-R3	$8199	✓
MT-07 LAMS	$12,749	✓
MT-07 HO	$13,599	✗
XSR700	$13,699	✓
MT-09	$15,699	✗
MT-09 SP	$18,099	✗
XSR900	$17,299	✗
Tracer 9 GT	$23,999	✗
Niken GT	$28,199	✗
MT-10	$23,649	✗
MT-10 SP	$27,349	✗
FJR1300	$32,649	✗
YZF-R6 (Race only)	$19,049	✗
YZF-R7 LAMS	$14,049	✓
YZF-R7 HO	$15,049	✗
YZF-R1	$28,199	✗
YZF-R1M	$37,099	✗
WR250F	$14,949	✓
WR450F	$16,549	✓
Tenere 700	$19,399	✗
Super Tenere	$25,949	✗

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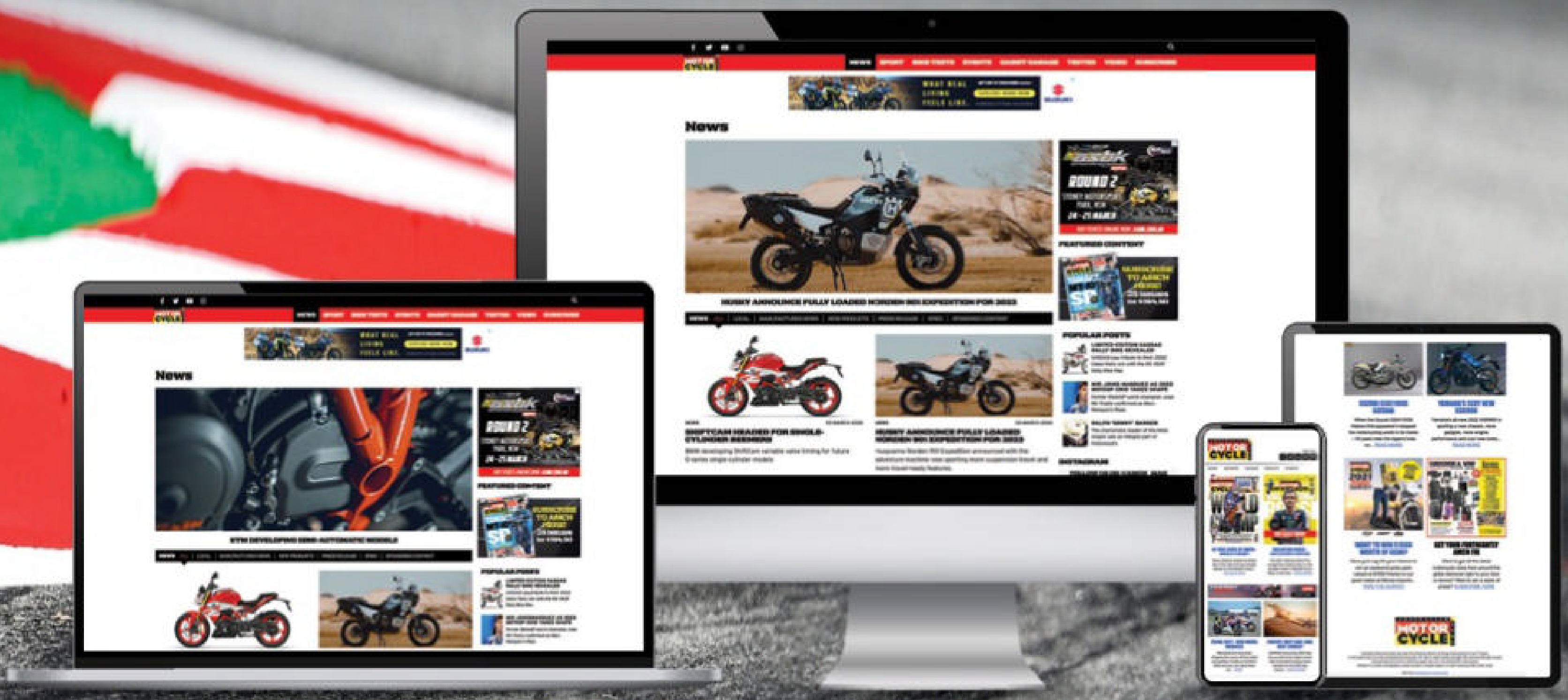

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"BRUCE WAS THE BACKBONE OF ALL THE GOOD TIMES"

AS THE ROLLER door came down, a big black crow turned a yellow eye our way before flapping over the roof. I thumbed the GS into life with trepidation, 55 years of motorcycling makes a bloke superstitious.

Maybe we're too late? Maybe it's Bruce? There's nothing lower on the emotional rollercoaster than a visit to say goodbye to a mate. My head's screaming. It's not right: a life-long hard-riding motorcyclist taken out by cancer in an organ you've never heard of?

Where's the bloody justice in that? What happened to the bloke who figured if he got clocked by coppers on his Ducati 996 at silly speeds he'd be better off not stopping?

A year ago we were lugging filing cabinets upstairs when I shifted the office. Bruce, one of the strongest men I've ever known, was always helping his mates. Whether from his work world of stage and bands to the building stuff he was so good at, to just keeping an eye on mates going loopy. And there's lots of loopy in the land of bands what with a cocktail of booze, drugs and groupies. Bruce Fogarty's dedication to his soulmate Julia and their two sons, Tim and Stu, stood out.

Last time I visited he figured he still had a chance to get well, to 'clean up the mess', the acres of sheds stuffed with motorcycles and cars or the wrecks lying around the paddock.

"Mate," I said, holding his hand, "all those unfinished projects, they're like trophies for a life spent helping others. The months with me building Karen's studio, that could've seen the Honda Four outfit back on the road or one of those old Kwaka 1300s you love ready to ride. You're the most unselfish person any of us know."

As we ride to the hospital I'm thinking of all the work Bruce did for the music world. Sure, as the drummer he kept his bands in time but it was Bruce who drove the truck, Bruce who booked the gigs, it was always The Fog as they called him who'd hold the show together. Bruce was the backbone of all the good times.

Even when 'Fogarty's Creedence Clearwater Review' – great use of a shared last name there mate! – was playing big gigs at the Penrith Panthers or the Tweed RSL, Bruce still found time to count Nicko and I through our blues sessions. Thanks to him we start tunes together, hold a rhythm and often – depending on beers and sundries – finish at the same time, too. And like us, and like you probably, he'd always arrive on his motorbike.

He had a few bikes, too. It was Fog who came riding when I had the new Rocket 3 GT last year (AMCN Vol 72 No 02), bringing his old Rocket III along for comparison. He had a tummy ache that day and was waiting for some test results. Turned out it was his last ride.

So Karen and I joined some close friends he's had since primary school to farewell the best mate a bloke could ever have. I heard him say: "See ya later Johno, love ya mate."

Riding home there were storm clouds brewing up the coast and I figured it'd be more than tears that wet my face. But the weather held, at least until we cracked a bottle open. Then the lightning crashed and the rain pelted down. Sounded like the Gods were welcoming a favoured son.

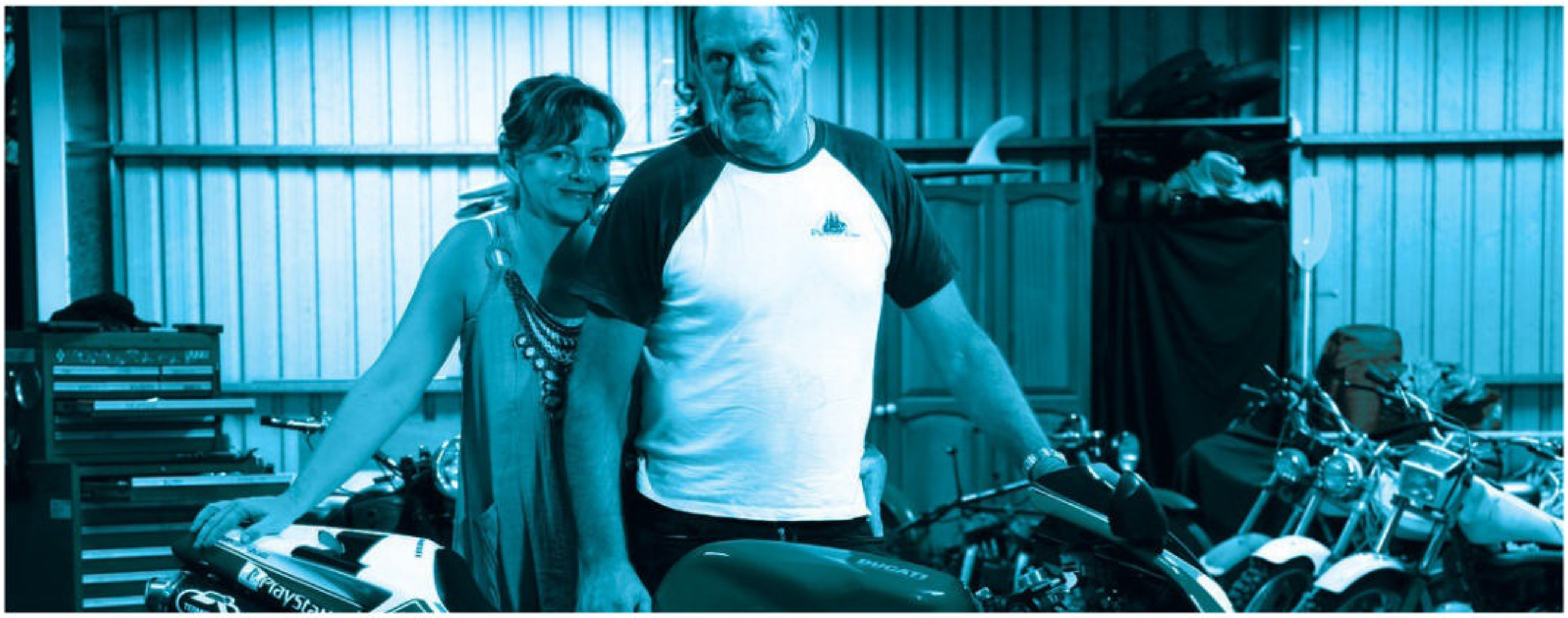
The phone rang, I knew it would. But it wasn't Julia, it was Nicko. Now my little brother hates phones, he never calls to chat and he had no idea Karen and I had been farewelling Bruce that same day.

"I'm drenched!" he said, buzzing with the excitement survival brings. "Should have seen it over the Gateway, raining so hard you couldn't see a thing, I bet the bloody cars couldn't see me either. The old Guzzi coughed a few times and I figured if she dies I would too. Bloody hell..."

"Why are you calling mate? It's not like you..."

"Ah, not sure really. Maybe just to tell you I'm alive. Does it matter?"

We're pretty close, my brother and I. We spent half our lives working and living together. Sometimes the connection doesn't need a phone. So I told him about Bruce.



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1. Tom Drane and Brook do battle during the 2022 Australian Flat Track Nationals

2. Brook, Drane and Harrison Ryan running line astern

3. ATF round two podium: (L to R) Daniel Wicks, Michael Kirkness and Brook

4. Drane trying to find a way past Brook

5. A few more local events for Brook before he heads to the world flat track title

REVOLVING RACER. WITH JARRED BROOK

“NOW 100 PERCENT OF MY TIME AND EFFORT WILL BE FOCUSED ON MAKING THE MOST OF THE OPPORTUNITY AT THE WORLD FLAT TRACK CHAMPIONSHIPS”

IT’S BEEN a wild start to the year for me with the massive news that I will be competing in the FIM World Flat Track Championship to be held throughout Europe between August and October. The five-round series starts in Manchester in the UK and finishes in Morizes, France, in October. The tracks are mostly between 300-500 metres in length and most are usually used for speedway.

There was a bit of a push a few years ago to get some Australians to compete, but the calendar was so spread out it was always difficult, travel-wise. Now the schedule is tighter, so it’s easier for international riders to compete. I’ll definitely be riding a Husqvarna and we are in the process of sorting out factory support. There will be some familiar faces around as I’ll have my dad, Andrew and another mate travelling with me to help out working on my bike and in the pits.

I’ll be able to take my own suspension and any other parts I want to run and fit them to a Husky FC 450. We are still in the process of going through the supplementary regulations and FIM rules to get specifics on what modifications can be made to the engine, but I feel the main difference we can make is in the suspension and getting that set up perfectly.

Since the news broke I’ve been watching videos of the racing from previous years on YouTube and I can see how critical qualifying will be, especially on the tighter TT tracks. I love the TT-style tracks; we don’t get to race on them much here in Australia but when we do they are always lots of fun. They bring a new challenge and require a different skill set.

The World Flat Track Championship is a similar racing setup to the Aussie Flat Track Nationals (AFT), which was a great concept that kicked off last year, running on the flat track and TT course at Appin. AFT aligns Australia with the style of flat-track racing that is most popular overseas, with the big thing the use of 19-inch rims. Appin is a tricky track to ride on, especially when it gets dry and rough. It becomes slippery and quite technical. Experience is very important in those situations and the winner, Michael Kirkness, showed how valuable that can be. There was some close and tight racing between four or five of us and we covered a lot of laps over the weekend.

Riding on the 19-inch rims is completely different to the 21/18 combination. The suspension setup is obviously completely different – you need to run different heights to try and make sure you have the bike geometry correct, and it needs to be set up perfectly to get the most out of the tyres. With the 19s being a similar tyre front and rear, they slide much the same. This means you have to be a lot smoother on the throttle to find grip than what you do with the 18-inch trials tyre that we would normally run for dirt track in Australia. You basically have to ride a lot more smooth and precise.

So far this year I have had a good run with some strong results at the Bathurst Long Track Masters, winning the 19s class and finishing third in the Unlimited. Later in the year I had intended to race in the USA, but now 100 percent of my time and effort will be focused on making the most of the opportunity at the World Flat Track Championship. I know that a good showing there will open some doors for 2024.

As for the lead up to Europe, I’ll be competing at the Queensland titles towards the end of April and then, potentially, some NSW titles before the opening round of AFT at Appin at the beginning of July.

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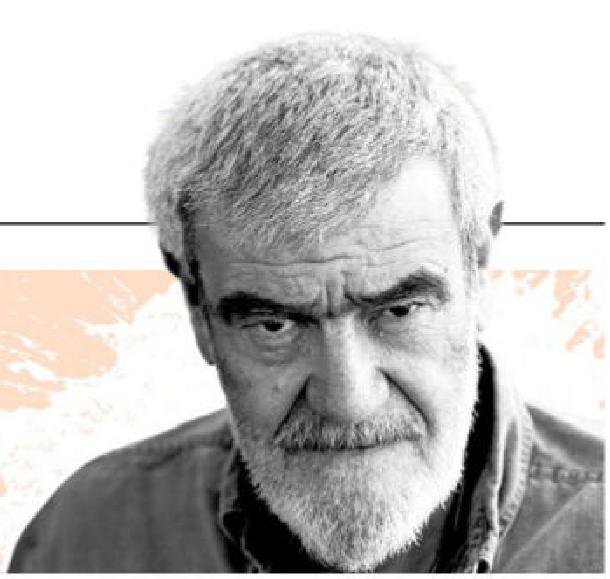
IN PIT LANE. WITH MICHAEL SCOTT



> "NEW HELPINGS AT THE AERO FEAST, WITH SO MANY NEW DISHES BEGINNING TO LOOK LIKE GLUTTONY"

BACK IN racing's second decade, aerodynamics became important. Dramatically handsome swooping dustbin fairings enclosed the front wheel… only to be banned on safety grounds (including brake cooling) in 1957.

Seven decades later some, including FIM president Jorge Viegas, are advocating a new aerodynamic ban. Reasons again include brake cooling, among other safety aspects. Others are purely aesthetic.

Contemporary MotoGP bikes now look so weird that even the most slavish stylist, turning racing trends into fashion, won't rush to imitate Yamaha's laughable inverted seat-back triangle (seen at Portimao tests).

There's a strong argument against outlandish MotoGP developments. Much of its appeal (vaulting power and super-sticky tyres apart) is just how close the bikes are to top-end street sportsbikes. Then again, some might think the opposite – that looking different is an advantage.

There are more important questions about the new helpings at the aero feast, with so many new dishes beginning to look like gluttony. The origins of aero were simply a search for more speed through less drag. The advent of double-size four-stroke engines and the enhanced efficiency of fuel injection and other electronics generated another factor: a need for more sophisticated cooling.

Things started to go a little crazy in 2015, innovative designer Gigi Dall'Igna's second year with Ducati. The first fairing-side winglets introduced downforce… reducing wheelies for more acceleration, and increasing pressure on the front tyre for harder braking.

As rivals copied Ducati, these appurtenances increased in size, number and sophistication, in spite of attempts by rule-makers to stem the tide. Ducati met these with fresh innovation, with 2019's so-called spoon under the swingarm… nominally for tyre-cooling, but adding downforce at the rear. After protests failed, the rivals again copied Ducati.

By now costs were rising fast… more time in the wind tunnel, and recruitment of ex-F1 aerodynamicists – particularly by Ducati and fellow Italian, Aprilia. A cost-saving rule allowing only one fairing update per season was a bandaid.

For there was more to come. By the end of 2021 Ducati was experimenting with diffuser ducting on the lower fairing flanks, reducing pressure there. The result: at high lean angles ground-effect gave another kind of grip-enhancing downforce.

In 2022 Aprilia did it differently – bulging fairing flanks that all-but scraped the road at full lean. Ducati experimented with something similar at preseason tests this year… the first time it has copied anyone.

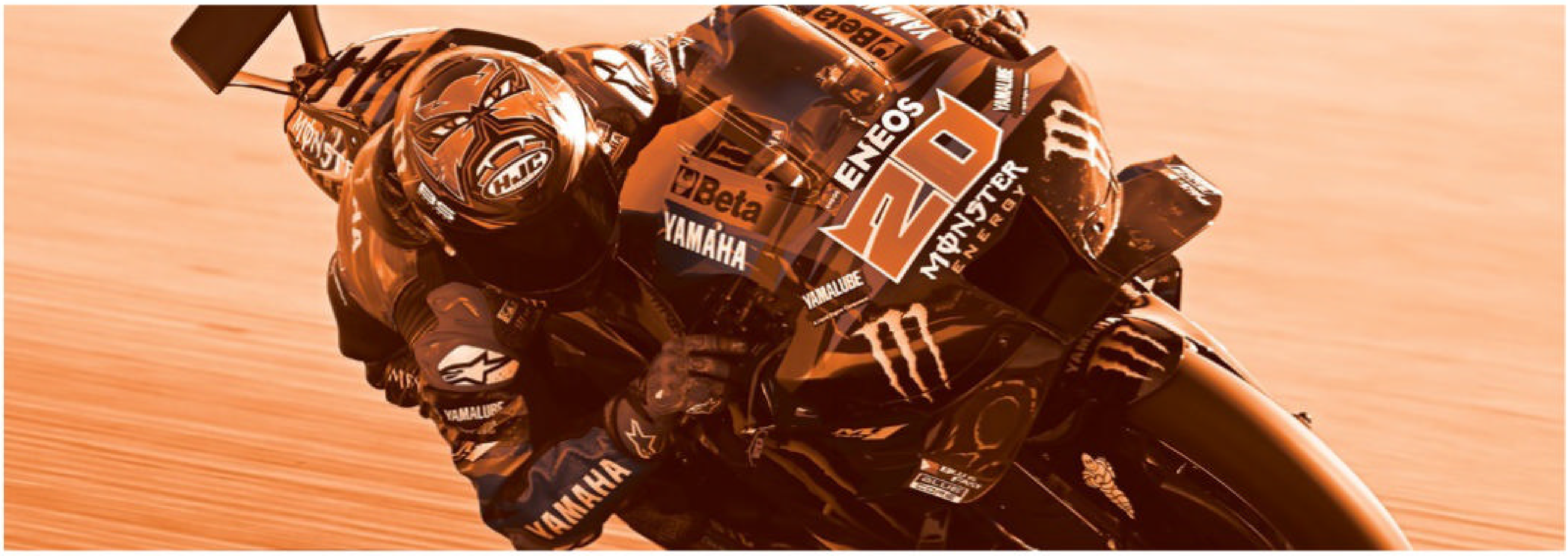
But there was more. Fairing design might be restricted. Seats not so. And during last season both Aprilia (briefly) and Ducati (more permanently) added winglets to the rear. Ostensibly, these add downforce to stabilise the rear under braking. Less obviously, they also further 'dirty' the airflow in the bike's wake, making slipstreaming and overtaking even more difficult.

By the start of this year, all the rivals were at least experimenting with similar devices, including Yamaha's aforementioned inverted triangle. One negative effect is difficult overtaking… not only because of drafting problems, but also because the turbulent air behind a bike is less effective at cooling a follower's front tyre, already suffering extra stress because of the harder braking. Instead of keeping the pressure on, attacking riders must drop back to let their front-tyre pressure recover.

At the same time, another exclusively MotoGP innovation further complicated the equation. Ride-height adjustment – dropping the rear – has the effect of reducing the angle of attack of the wings, cutting drag for more top speed. Consequently, it allows a greater angle of attack for more downforce under braking, when the rear is released to normal ride height.

How relevant is this to street riders? Actually, not at all. Race engineering is now far too sophisticated to expect racing to improve the breed. We could however expect it to *inform* the breed.

But what's the point, if that information is simply irrelevant?



RACE REPORT.

YOUR FORTNIGHTLY FIX

ROUND 01 ALGARVE INTERNATIONAL CIRCUIT, PORTUGAL 24-26 MARCH // 2023 MOTOGP WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

MOTOGP

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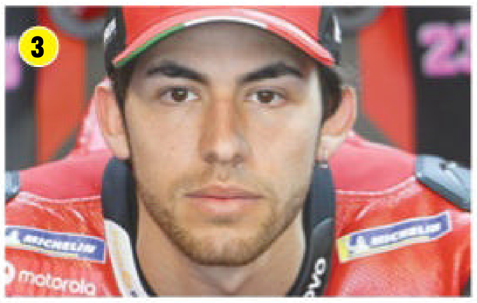
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RED ALERT

Bagnaia in control in chaotic opening weekend

REPORT **NEIL MORRISON** + PHOTOGRAPHY **GOLD&GOOSE**

THE CHANGES to MotoGP for 2023 are nearly too numerous to mention. The first season opener on European soil in 17 years debuted a revised schedule and format, including the highly controversial ‘Sprint’. There was a heroes walk, an area where riders were penned in with fans around, and a riders’ parade, where they were driven around the track in a trailer to wave at the grandstands. There was even new theme music, which soundtracked the weekend’s events. Yet even in this new era of racing, the man on top remained the same.

Across a weekend of near-perfect weather on the Algarve, Francesco Bagnaia (Lenovo Ducati) demonstrated exactly why the majority of the MotoGP field had tipped him for this year’s title, winning the inaugural Sprint race on Saturday, before holding Maverick Viñales (Aprilia Racing) at arm’s length the following afternoon to take a perfect 37-point haul away from the opening weekend.

Bagnaia rode with the authority of a champion all weekend, showcasing a wily knack for staying out of trouble in chaotic surroundings to boot. His late harrying of Jorge Martin (Pramac Ducati) paid off in the Sprint, with the Spaniard relinquishing first place with a braking mistake 10 corners from the flag.

And he never appeared flustered in the feature race, even as Viñales was applying incessant late-race pressure, to chip a few tenths out of his one-second lead.

With those touted to push Bagnaia hardest this year disintegrating around him – Enea Bastianini (Lenovo Ducati) will miss the next race in Argentina through injury sustained here, and Marc Marquez (Repsol Honda) is a doubt, while Yamaha’s familiar failings heavily plagued Fabio Quartararo (Monster Energy Yamaha) – it appears a tall order for anyone to wrestle the number-one plate from his bike, even at this early stage.

But Bagnaia wasn’t the main story here. The revised format, designed to extract excitement from nearly every session, and the addition of a 12-lap Sprint, was the subject of intense debate. Not least because of Pol Espargaro’s (Tech3 GasGas) horrendous crash on Friday, before a spectacular yet hair-raising Sprint, which featured Luca Marini’s (VR46 Ducati) tagging of Bastianini,

Cracker Jack

MotoGP 4th/7th

THIS WAS A KTM debut that no one had envisioned, even Miller himself. But still the Australian was still a touch frustrated, after he missed out on fourth place after a gutsy performance. From 17th at the preseason test here, the Australian shocked the world by setting the fastest time on Friday, and challenging for the podium in the Sprint (finishing fourth) before a combative ride to seventh on Sunday. All in all, many positives for the 28-year-old. Suddenly, that half-season transition period he spoke of in preseason seems greatly exaggerated.

“It’s been a good weekend. I’d be telling porky pies if I said I’m happy with seventh, just because I was running with those boys at the front for a long way. I made a small mistake 10 laps to the end, missing a shift going into five and allowing Alex Marquez through. It was starting to get pretty frustrating there behind him. It’s weird being on the other side of the table now, dealing with that Ducati power. I couldn’t put enough daylight between myself and him to lead into the first corner. But it was a great race for learning the bike.”

1. A new era gets underway with the start of the MotoGP Sprint race **2.** Zarco is fourth in the standings after round one **3.** A horror debut for Bastianini in the Ducati factory team when he was taken out by Marini in the Sprint race and broke his right scapula **4.** Marquez takes out hometown hero, Oliveira, early in the full-length race **5.** Bagnaia's title defence got off to a ripping start

5

IT APPEARS A TALL ORDER FOR ANYONE TO WRESTLE THE NUMBER-ONE PLATE FROM HIS BIKE

which broke the factory man's right shoulder blade, as well as a number of other scary incidents.

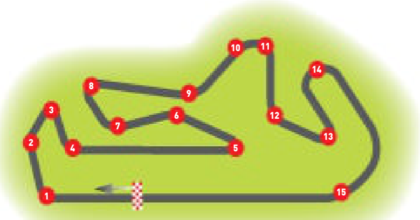
And the drama continued into Sunday. Bagnaia had just hit the front of the feature race when Marquez – fourth at the time – locked his front tyre when braking for Turn 3. He had to release the brakes, causing him to clip Martin's right leg and foot before slamming into Miguel Oliveira (RNF Aprilia), taking himself and the home hero down. It earned him a double long-lap penalty for the next race. More painful still? A potentially fractured first metacarpal in his right hand. All the added aggression resulted in five of the 22-rider field leaving Portugal injured, with two of them certain to miss round two, begging the question: is this new format entirely sustainable?

Fresh from a shock pole position – his first in the dry in 1253 days – and a brilliant ride to third in the Sprint, Marquez was up for another fight in the feature race. But he was ragged from the start. From second on the grid, Martin had taken control at Turn 1 before Marquez lost the front into Turn 3, standing both men up – an ominous portent of things to come. That allowed Oliveira through, whipping the majority of the 67,204 partisan crowd into ecstasy.

Bagnaia nipped in behind Martin, with Marquez recovering well ahead of Viñales, Jack Miller (Red Bull KTM), Marco Bezzecchi (VR46 Ducati) and Johann Zarco (Pramac Ducati).

After hovering behind the leader for the majority of the Sprint, Bagnaia was in no mood for waiting. Having passed Martin at Turn 3 on lap

MotoGP: Round 1 results and standings



Portimao, Portugal **4.59km**

2022 Winners

MotoGP **F Quartararo**
Moto2 **J Dixon**
Moto3 **S Garcia**

MotoGP Round 1 Sprint 12 Laps

POS	RIDER	NAT	BIKE	TIME
1	F BAGNAIA	ITA	DUC	19m52.862s
2	J MARTIN	SPA	DUC	+0.307s
3	M MARQUEZ	SPA	HON	+1.517s
4	J MILLER	AUS	KTM	+1.603s
5	M VIÑALES	SPA	APR	+1.854s
6	A ESPARGARO	SPA	APR	+2.106s
7	M OLIVEIRA	POR	APR	+2.940s
8	J ZARCO	FRA	DUC	+5.595s
9	A MARQUEZ	SPA	DUC	+5.711s
10	F QUARTARARO	FRA	YAM	+5.924s
11	R FERNANDEZ	SPA	APR	+8.160s
12	B BINDER	RSA	KTM	+8.384s
13	A RINS	SPA	HON	+11.288s
14	F MORBIDELLI	ITA	YAM	+17.138s
15	T NAKAGAMI	JPN	HON	+18.128s
16	F DI GIANNANTONIO	ITA	DUC	+21.235s

DNS: P ESPARGARO (SPA, GAS) **DNF:** M BEZZECCHI (ITA, DUC), E BASTIANINI (ITA, DUC), L MARINI (ITA, DUC), J MIR (SPA, HON), A FERNANDEZ (SPA, GAS)

POLE POSITION (AND NEW BEST LAP)

M MARQUEZ 1m37.226s

FASTEST LAP

NOT GIVEN

MotoGP Round 1 25 Laps

POS	RIDER	NAT	BIKE	TIME
1	F BAGNAIA	ITA	DUC	41m25.401s
2	M VIÑALES	SPA	APR	+0.687s
3	M BEZZECCHI	ITA	DUC	+2.726s
4	J ZARCO	FRA	DUC	+8.060s
5	A MARQUEZ	SPA	DUC	+8.125s
6	B BINDER	RSA	KTM	+8.247s
7	J MILLER	AUS	KTM	+8.381s
8	F QUARTARARO	FRA	YAM	+8.543s
9	A ESPARGARO	SPA	APR	+9.294s
10	A RINS	SPA	HON	+11.591s
11	J MIR	SPA	HON	+16.992s
12	T NAKAGAMI	JPN	HON	+17.448s
13	A FERNANDEZ	SPA	GAS	+21.723s
14	F MORBIDELLI	ITA	YAM	+27.050s

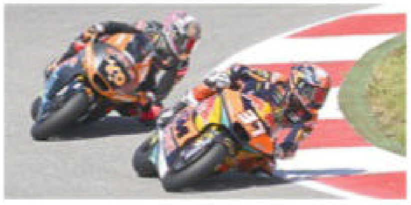
DNS: E BASTIANINI (ITA, DUC), P ESPARGARO (SPA, GAS) **DNF:** J MARTIN (SPA, DUC), M MARQUEZ (SPA, HON), M OLIVEIRA (POR, APR), R FERNANDEZ (SPA, APR), F DI GIANNANTONIO (ITA, DUC), L MARINI (ITA, DUC)

FASTEST LAP (AND NEW RECORD)

A ESPARGARO 1m38.872s

STANDINGS AFTER 1 OF 21 ROUNDS

1 BAGNAIA 37, 2 VINALES 25, 3 BEZZECCHI 16, 4 ZARCO 15, 5 MILLER 15, 6 A MARQUEZ 12, 7 A ESPARGARO 11, 8 BINDER 10, 9 MARTIN 9, 10 QUARTARARO 8, 11 M MARQUEZ 7, 12 RINS 6, 13 MIR 5, 14 NAKAGAMI 4, 15 FERNANDEZ 3.



Moto2 Round 1 21 Laps

POS	RIDER	NAT	BIKE	TIME
1	P ACOSTA	SPA	KAL	36m04.193s
2	A CANET	SPA	KAL	+1.358s
3	T ARBOLINO	ITA	KAL	+4.460s
4	F SALAC	CZE	KAL	+7.110s
5	M GONZALEZ	SPA	KAL	+8.193s
6	J DIXON	GBR	KAL	+9.146s
7	S LOWES	GBR	KAL	+9.649s
8	A ARENAS	SPA	KAL	+12.270s
9	S CHANTRA	THA	KAL	+13.941s
10	J ALCOBA	SPA	KAL	+13.840s
11	C VIETTI	ITA	KAL	+14.086s
12	B BALTUS	BEL	KAL	+14.515s
13	F ALDEGUER	SPA	BOS	+15.445s
14	J ROBERTS	USA	KAL	+25.444s
15	S GARCIA	SPA	KAL	+26.876s
16	D BINDER	RSA	KAL	+40.233s
17	B GOMEZ	SPA	KAL	+41.710s
18	D FOGGIA	ITA	KAL	+41.806s
19	LD PORTA	ITA	KAL	+42.116s
20	S KELLY	USA	KAL	+42.141s
21	M RAMIREZ	SPA	FOR	+44.802s
22	R SKINNER	GBR	KAL	+45.630s
23	J TORRES	SPA	KAL	+1m02.643S

DNF: A LOPEZ (SPA, BOS), Z GOORBERGH (NED, KAL), D SANCHIS (SPA, FOR), B BENDSNEYDER (NED, KAL)

POLE POSITION

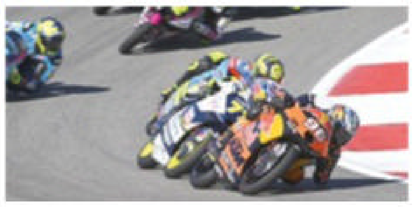
SALAC 1m42.323s

FASTEST LAP

ACOSTA 1m42.525s

STANDINGS AFTER 1 OF 21 ROUNDS

1 ACOSTA 25, 2 CANET 20, 3 ARBOLINO 16, 4 SALAC 13, 5 GONZALES 11, 6 DIXON 10, 7 LOWES 9, ARENAS 8, 9 CHANTRA 7, 10 ALCOBA 6, 11 VIETTI 5, 12 BALTUS 4, 13 ALDEGUER 3, 14 ROBERTS 2, 15 GARCIA 1.



Moto3 Round 1 19 Laps

POS	RIDER	NAT	BIKE	TIME
1	D HOLGADO	SPA	KTM	34m27.061s
2	D MUÑOZ	SPA	KTM	+0.160s
3	D MOREIRA	BRA	KTM	+0.175s
4	J RUEDA	SPA	KTM	+0.206s
5	J MASIA	SPA	HON	+ 0.233s
6	A SASAKI	JPN	HUS	+1.090s
7	S NEPA	ITA	KTM	+1.125s
8	X ARTIGAS	SPA	CFM	+1.137s
9	J KELSO	AUS	CFM	+1.268s
10	D ÖNCÜ	TUR	KTM	+1.409s
11	K TOBA	JPN	HON	+2.852s
12	C VEIJER	NED	HUS	+6.904s
13	D SALVADOR	SPA	KTM	+6.931s
14	T SUZUKI	JPN	HON	+9.722S
15	R ROSSI	ITA	HON	+9.748s
16	R YAMANAKA	JPN	GAS	+9.771s
17	M BERTELLE	ITA	HON	+19.803s
18	M AJI	INA	HON	20.317s
19	R FENATI	ITA	HON	+29.900s
20	T FURUSATO	JPN	HON	+29.948Ss
21	J WHATLEY	GBR	HON	+29.904s
22	S AZMAN	MAL	KTM	+29.969s
23	A CARRASCO	SPA	KTM	+30.066s

DNF: I ORTOLÁ (SPA, KTM), D ALONSO (COL, GAS), F FARIOLI (ITA, KTM), S OGDEN (GBR, HON)

POLE POSITION (AND NEW BEST LAP)

SASAKI 1m46.798s

FASTEST LAP (AND NEW RECORD)

ONCU 1m47.563s

STANDINGS AFTER 1 OF 21 ROUNDS

1 HOLGADO 25, 2 MUNOZ 20, 3 MOREIRA 16, 4 RUEDA 13, 5 MASIA 11, 6 SASAKI 10, 7 NEPA 9, 8 ARTIGAS 8, 9 KELSO 7, 10 ONCU 7, 11 TOBA 5, 12 VEIJER 4, 13 SALVADOR 3, 14 SUZUKI 2, 15 ROSSI 1.

1. Binder was strong in the main race, finishing sixth – just in front of Miller **2.** The Sunday podium: (L to R) Vinales, Bagnaia and Bezzecchi **3.** And in the Sprint the top three were Martin (left), Bagnaia and Marquez **4.** Martin and Miller in the Sprint – the Aussie even led for a while **5.** Marquez leads Oliveira, Miller, Vinales and Espargaro

ROUND 01 ALGARVE INTERNATIONAL CIRCUIT, PORTUGAL 24-26 MARCH // 2023 MOTOGP WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

MOTOGP

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two, he sprung an attack on Oliveira nine turns later with a neat move at Turn 13. With the Marquez incident coming at the start of the following lap, his timing proved to be inspired. With Marquez and Oliveira now out, and Martin pushed off track and back to 16th, it was left to Viñales to challenge.

And he initially made a race of it. From 0.7sec behind at the close of lap three, the Aprilia man was just 0.2sec off the reigning champ two laps on. That gap remained stationary until lap 12. By then the pair had pulled clear of Bezzecchi, now third after a lap six pass on Miller and off, chasing after the leaders. Alex Marquez (Gresini Ducati) was fourth, ahead of the Red Bull KTMs, with Brad Binder joining his new teammate despite a neck injury sustained here when testing a fortnight before.

Up front and Bagnaia was consistency personified, reeling off a series of laps in the 1m39s, forcing Viñales to falter slightly around mid-race distance. Bagnaia's lead grew by 0.4sec on lap 13 and it exceeded one second for the first time on the 16th circuit.

"Pecco did another step on the rhythm. I tried to follow him. I made a few mistakes on the brakes," Viñales explained afterwards. "Then I tried to cool down the tyres and wait for the last laps."

The Catalan was good to his word, regrouping for a final push. As the performance of Bagnaia's medium rear tyre deteriorated, Viñales mounted an unlikely late comeback. "After 16 laps, Maverick was again pushing a lot. The last two laps I was completely without tyres and I was a bit in struggle," explained the new number-one. His pursuer skimmed 0.4sec out of his lead on the penultimate lap. But Bagnaia soon steadied the ship, and was calmness personified on the final circuit, ensuring his lead didn't fall below 0.6sec. After such a troubled start to 2022, here he showed both he and Ducati are starting on the front foot. Viñales was an excellent second, with Bezzecchi claiming a second premier class podium in third, 2sec back of the Aprilia.

If up front was a cat-and-mouse chase, the fight for fourth was a full-blooded affair. For most of the race's second half, Alex Marquez was on the defensive from the two factory KTMs behind. Twice Miller passed his old Moto3 adversary in the final sector (laps 18 and 19), only for the Ducati's top speed to tell, Marquez breezing back by along the front straight. By lap 21 the group was entering Binder territory, with the South African muscling a way past his teammate at Turn 3. Then it was his turn to attempt to breach the Ducati's defences, executing a fine move at Turn

"AFTER 16 LAPS, MAVERICK WAS AGAIN PUSHING A LOT. THE LAST TWO LAPS I WAS COMPLETELY WITHOUT TYRES"

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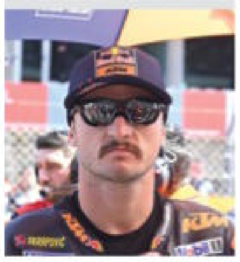
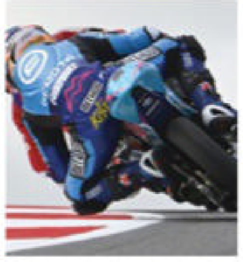
DEBUT OF THE WEEKEND

Jack Miller's debut for KTM was full of intrigue: after a solid if unspectacular preseason, would his talent, courage and willpower come to the fore? The answer is yes, starting with the fastest practice time on Friday before two solid race results. Marquez, Martin and Bagnaia were impressed: they said as much in the post-Sprint race chatter.





CRUNCH OF THE WEEKEND

After a breakout weekend when he qualified on the front row and was in the leading group for the entire Moto3 race on the CFMoto, Aussie Joel Kelso's recent bout of misfortune continued when he speared into the rear of the winning machine of Dani Holgado just after the chequered flag. He came down hard and broke his ankle, putting him out of round two.

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11, only to lose out to Marquez along the front straight.

This scrapping allowed Zarco and Aleix Espargaro (Aprilia Racing) into the fray, while Quartararo – fresh from disposing with Marini, who would later crash – soon joined in. Suddenly, this was a six-rider brawl.

On the penultimate lap, Binder appeared to have the measure of it, thanks to a brilliant move under Marquez exiting Turn 14. But once again Marquez made the Ducati power tell on the front straight. It was then Zarco began the lap of his life. Starting it seventh, he made short work of Miller (Turn 3) and Binder (Turn 11) before a gorgeous pass exiting Turn 14 was enough to demote Marquez to fifth at the death. Binder was a heroic sixth, ahead of Miller, a frustrated Quartararo, left to rue his poor qualifying and shoddy start, and Espargaro in ninth. Alex Rins (LCR Honda) was 10th, just 11.591sec behind the winner, making this the 10th closest top-10 finish in premier class history.

Bagnaia (37 points) already has a healthy advantage after just one round with Viñales (25), Bezzecchi (16), Zarco (15) and Miller (15) all well placed.

moto2

ACOSTA LAYS DOWN A MARKER

6. The Moto2 podium: (L to R) Canet, Acosta and Arbolino **7.** Holgado was fast and tenacious: a deserving Moto3 winner **8.** The Moto3 top guns: (L to R) Moreira, Holgado and Muñoz

A SIGN OF things to come? Twenty-nine of the 30 men on this year's Moto2 grid will hope not, after Pedro Acosta (Ajo Kalex) posted a performance of ominous control to win round one. This 21-lap race was poised for an all-Spanish last-lap as Aron Canet (Pons Kalex) stalked his compatriot's every move from the second lap, when Acosta had taken control and the pair separated themselves from the chasing pack.

But the 2021 Moto3 World Champ clearly had something in reserve as he edged toward the chequered flag. From lap 17 of 21, Acosta was able to lower his times to the mid-1m42s at will. Initially Canet hung on, only to experience drastically deteriorating front grip on the penultimate lap. Suddenly Acosta's lead was up to 0.8sec, and he dragged it out to 1.3sec by the end. His perfect preseason wasn't all for show.

As many as six men contested third from the second lap, with Manuel Gonzalez (Yamaha Mastercamp Kalex), Filip Salac (Gresini Kalex), Albert Arenas (Ajo Kalex), Tony Arbolino (Marc VDS Kalex), Jeremy Alcoba (Gresini Kalex) and Darryn Binder (IntactGP Kalex) all involved. By the ninth lap, Arbolino had got past them all and set about reeling in the lead duo. From 1.4sec off, he got the deficit under one second by lap 14 before tyre wear led him to accept a comfortable third, 2.5sec clear of Salac, fourth his best dry weather Moto2 result.

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Gonzalez dropped back to fifth, while Englishmen Jake Dixon (Aspar Kalex) and Sam Lowes (Marc VDS Kalex) recovered from poor openings to pass Arenas and place sixth and seventh respectively.

moto3

HOLGADO CLAIMS VICTORY

THE NEW KIDS are in town. Last season, Dani Holgado (Tech3 KTM), David Muñoz (BOE KTM) and Diogo Moreira (MSI KTM) contested the Rookie of the Year crown.

In Portugal, they demonstrated their readiness to take the next step up, by featuring toward the front of the first Moto3 showing of the year.

Their respective causes were helped by Deniz Oncu (Ajo KTM) stalling on the grid, necessitating a start from pitlane. And they all had to overcome Joel Kelso (PruestelGP CFMOTO), after the Australian blazed into an early lead. Soon, he was swarmed with Holgado making most of the running up front. Moreira, Ayumu Sasaki (IntactGP Husqvarna), Muñoz, Jaume Masia (Leopard Honda), Kaito Toba (SIC58 Honda) and Kelso were all in close company, while Jose Antonio Rueda (Ajo KTM) was recovering from a poor start. He joined the lead group on Lap 13.

Holgado was clearly superior through the infield, putting nearly 0.5sec into his pursuers, only to be reeled in along the front straight.

And aside from a crazy lap 15, when the pace slowed by over 2sec, allowing Rueda through to sensationally lead, Holgado just had enough to maintain control of proceedings.

Starting the final lap, he had just 0.2sec in hand over Muñoz, Moreira and Masia. But a flawless last circuit saw him claim a maiden GP victory by 0.16sec, just ahead of Muñoz, while Moreira denied Rueda a maiden podium in his GP debut by out-dragging him to the line for third out of the final turn.

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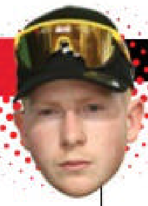
TISSOT
GRANDE PRÉMIO TISSOT DE PORTUGAL 2023

Masia was 0.2sec off the winner in fifth, with Sasaki one second back in sixth. Oncu recovered brilliantly to claim 10th, 1.4sec off the victor.

Kelso Cutback



Moto3 9th

THE UPS AND downs of racing. Kelso had just enjoyed one of his best weekends.

The 19-year-old started from the front row for the first time in his debut for his new team thanks to setting the third fastest time in qualifying. Kelso started brilliantly, leading the first two laps before slipping back to ninth, in the midst of the lead pack throughout the 19-lapper.

Yet immediately after taking the chequered flag, Kelso went to remove a tear-off visor, was unsighted and hit into the back of Holgado, waving to the crowd and celebrating his maiden triumph ahead. The violent impact sent Kelso over the handlebars, and broke his left ankle on the way down, ruling him out of the next race at least - a cruel end to a weekend of promise.

ROUND 02 SYDNEY MOTORSPORT PARK, 24-25 MARCH // 2023 AUSTRALIAN SUPERBIKE CHAMPIONSHIP

SUPERBIKE

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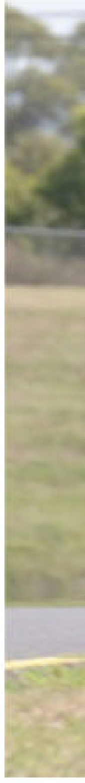

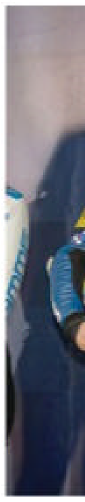

HIGH FIVE!

Untroubled Waters makes it five victories from five starts in 2023

REPORT **MATT O'CONNELL** + PHOTOGRAPHY **ROB MOTT**

THE JUGGERNAUT that is Joshua Waters and the McMartin Racing with K-Tech Ducati V4 R continue to dominate the Australian Superbike Championship, recording two race wins at Sydney Motorsport Park to remain unbeaten in 2023. It was the first visit to the New South Wales circuit since 2019, and this time it would be under lights in a condensed format that saw practice and qualifying completed on the Friday with racing concluding on Saturday night.

The Yamaha Racing Team duo of Cru Halliday and Mike Jones threw down the challenge early, with local Halliday busting Robbie Bugden's qualifying record from 2013 to take pole from his teammate Jones. Waters completed the front row and, as the first race got underway, it was Waters that led. If ever there was a chance for Halliday to claim his maiden Superbike victory, it was this weekend and his start didn't let him down, maintaining touch in the opening laps along with Glenn Allerton (Spectro Racing Oils – GT Racing BMW), Troy Herfoss (Penrite Honda Racing) and Max Stauffer (GTR MotoStars Yamaha). Jones had work to do after slipping to sixth, sitting in front of Arthur Sissis (Unitech Racing Yamaha) and Bryan Staring (MotoGo Yamaha).

As the field settled, battles emerged as Waters attempted a breakaway. Halliday responded, and further down the order Jones had also upped the ante – firstly accounting for Stauffer then Herfoss and Allerton. Herfoss was late on the brakes at every opportunity, latching on to

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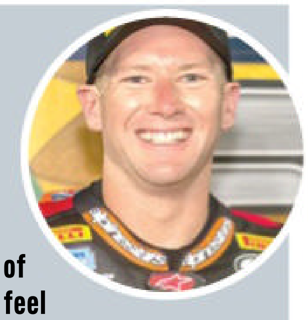
WINNER'S WORDS

Josh Waters



"It was an incredible result this weekend, especially in the wet where we didn't really have a lot of data for setup. I felt like the faster I rode the better the grip was, because the tyre was generating more heat. At the start of the race I could see everyone was struggling and I didn't feel great myself, so I had to change the way I rode. In the first race I did have some grip issues, but the pace was so fast - racing under the old lap record for all but one lap. It's a matter of being in the right place at the right time if you get a red flag; it worked out for us and now we prepare for Queensland."

1. Waters can do no wrong in 2023 **2.** Stauffer on the MotoStars Yamaha **3.** Staring ahead of polesitter, Halliday **4.** The race two podium: (L to R) Halliday, Waters and Herfoss **5.** Under lights in ASBK for the first time - in slick conditions, too! **6.** Halliday's pace in practice and qualifying was scintillating **7.** Halliday and Jones in Yamaha Racing Team formation **8.** Allerton was solid with fourth overall **9.** Paris Hardwick is keeping the Kawasaki flag flickering in ASBK

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MI-BIKE
MOTORCYCLE INSURANCE

7

the battle for fourth with Allerton, Staring and Sissis with Stauffer not far away. As the frantic pace waged on, Halliday began to reel in Waters before disaster struck for Jones as his bike expired in a cloud of white smoke along the front straight. The red flags were brought out, the race declared and Waters continued undefeated.

"That was out of my control," lamented Halliday. "I'd closed that gap from seven tenths to a tenth, there was absolutely a move coming." Herfoss completed the podium followed by Allerton, Staring, Sissis and Stauffer. Ted Collins (Livson BMW), Broc Pearson (Desmosport Ducati) and Matt Walters (Australian Motorcycle Marine Finance – Aprilia) rounded out the top 10.

Later in the evening, Race 2 saw ASBK racing under lights for the first time ever – with the added complexity of a wet track. Sissis blitzed the start while Halliday and Allerton were flying, but it was all for nothing as steady rain fell, bringing out the red flags with an eight-lap restart announced.

Sissis made another flyer but a determined Herfoss pushed through, followed by Halliday and Allerton into the driving rain. As Herfoss and Halliday ran deep and wide at Turn 1, Waters, who had been sitting patiently mid-pack, made his move. The Mildura rider then gapped the field by nearly a second in the space of one lap and, by the time Herfoss made a pass on Allerton at the start of lap six, Waters was over seven seconds clear in a wet-weather masterclass. Behind Herfoss, the podium fight was on. Halliday and Sissis had both dispatched of Allerton, with Sissis hunting down his maiden Superbike podium. It wasn't to be, with Sissis remaining fourth but ahead of Allerton who had to fight to keep the fast-finishing Pearson at bay. Collins and Stauffer were next home, with Jones taking 10th. With his main bike fire damaged, the YRT team had very little time to prepare his second bike for wet running. The outcome means Jones now has plenty of work to do to stay in the championship fight for 2023.

RACE 2 SAW ASBK RACING UNDER LIGHTS FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER – WITH THE ADDED COMPLEXITY OF A WET TRACK

The series now moves to Jones' home track of Queensland Raceway over 28-30 April.

1. Lynch was fouth overall in Superport **2.** ...but the day and night belonged to Dunker **3.** The Supersport round podium: (L to R) Simpson, Dunker and Nelson **4.** OJC round winner Fordyce ahead of John Pelgrave **5.** More Fordyce action **6.** OJC podium: (L to R) Knezovic, Fordyce and Nauta **7.** Demmery doing the business under lights **8.** Swain

ROUND 02 SYDNEY MOTORSPORT PARK, 24-25 MARCH // 2023 AUSTRALIAN SUPERBIKE CHAMPIONSHIP

SUPERSPORT

SLAM DUNK

WITH ANOTHER large Yamaha-dominated field of 26 riders, Sean Condon (Digbiz Earthworx) used his local knowledge to take pole in the Michelin Supersport class but it was Oli Simpson who snatched the holeshot ahead of Tom Bramich (Carl Cox Motorsport), who made an incredible start despite qualifying in seventh. Jake Farnsworth (Worth Race Developments) also started hard, taking the lead from Simpson by the end of the second lap.

A large group formed at the front that included Hayden Nelson (Taree Motorcycles), John Lytras (Caboolture Yamaha), Ty Lynch (AMR Motorsports) and Cameron Dunker (GTR MotoStars) - but it was Farnsworth and Simpson giving it everything alongside the experienced Condon. A mistake at Turn 3 dropped Simpson down the order, while Condon held his composure to seize the lead following a huge moment for Farnsworth. Settled at the front and finding confidence, Condon was unstoppable and took the flag by one second from Farnsworth. Bramich completed the podium with Simpson, Dunker, Lynch, Lytras and Nelson fighting it out down to eighth.

Race 2's mixed conditions left riders scrambling to decide on tyres. While Simpson charged through from the second row of the grid, Race 1 winner Condon went backwards after choosing to run on slicks. Three laps in Simpson held the lead from Lynch and Dunker with Jack Passfield (Stay Upright) and Luke Sanders (Race Center) also looking strong. After impressing in the wet at Phillip Island, the luck of Sanders ran out as his rear-end flicked around with venom on the approach to the fast Turn 4. As Dunker and Simpson pushed out front, the rest of the field battled the drying circuit depending on their tyre choice. Condon crashed out while others moved forward, including Scott Nicholson (Traction Control Motorsport) who was on a charge.

With two laps remaining, Dunker looked threatening, but a slip from Simpson allowed him through. Nearly 20 seconds behind, Passfield and Lynch had fallen into the clutches of a chasingJonathon Nahlous (Complete AV), Dallas Skeer (YRD) and Nicholson. The bad luck continued for Passfield, left behind as Nicholson drafted Nahlous and Nelson to the line to take third to fifth. Simpson took second, while the focus was deservedly on a jubilant Dunker, claiming victory in the wet in only his fifth Supersport start.

WINNER'S WORDS

Cameron Dunker

"When I saw it was starting to rain in Race 2, there were some flashbacks to Phillip Island where I didn't do so well. I was happy to sit behind Oli the whole race, as he gave me a reference for how the track was. The last two laps he made a mistake and I was able to capitalise on that. I can't thank my team enough and also thanks to Aidan Hayes for letting me ride his bike. "

3
MOTORCYCLE INSURANCE

OJC

KIWI CLASS

AFTER QUALIFYING in 10th, Kiwi Haydn Fordyce has taken the OJC round win at Sydney Motorsport Park. Fordyce dropped to 12th at the start of Race 1 before moving forward and breaking the lap record in the process. Valentino Knezovic took second followed by Hunter Corney, with Ella McClausland and Jed Fyffe just missing the podium.

In Race 2, McClausland rode a superb race only to be demoted for a jumped start, handing victory to Fordyce with Knezovic and Bodie Paige completing the podium. After running at the front and surviving a slip-streaming attack, McClausland said: "I proved to myself and so many out there that I have the pace to be a true championship contender and race winner." Paige took victory in the final race by 3.3sec from Riley Nuata and Archie Schmidt, with McClausland just off the podium. Fordyce finished in seventh, but it was enough for the round win.

"The opportunity to race under lights has been amazing and I am very happy with my results," Fordyce said.

6
MOTORCYCLE INSURANCE

was second oveall with a 3-1-2 scorecard **9.** Tara Morrison on the Kawasaki **10.** Russo was fourth overall at Sydney Motorsport Park **11.** And the SSPT300 /R3 Cup podium: (L to R) Swain, Demmery and Gawith **12.** Watson en route to a Superbike Masters clean sweep **13.** Corey Glock on the Suzuki GSX-R750 **14.** Corser (left) was second overall, standing next to Watson and Glock

SSPT300 / R3 CUP

DEMMERY DOES

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TIGHT SCHEDULING saw the Supersport 300 Championship and R3 Cup run together at SMSP, with Brandon Demmery (Sureflight Yamaha R3) proving the class of the field, taking two race wins and a second. Jai Russo (Russo Performance R3) took second with Cameron Swain (Caboolture Yamaha R3) third and Brodie Gawith (Megacycle R3) close behind in fourth position.

Swain attempted a break away in Race 2 only to be reeled in by Demmery with Russo, Gawith and Snell all part of the large lead group. Holding back for a slipstreaming move runs the risk of being behind in case of a red flag, and with six laps completed a crash for Brock Quinlan (RaceDNA Motorsports R3) realised this situation. The winner: Swain by a mere 0.016sec, with Demmery second and Russo third.

Swain made a last-minute decision to run slicks after a downpour before the start of Race 3 where Demmery forced him to keep the lead - but not slowing enough to become prey to the pack behind. The 25-year-old timed his run perfectly, picking up his second victory of the weekend and the championship lead. Swain was second and Gawith third.

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WINNER'S WORDS

Brandon Demmery

"The plan was to let Cam lead. The younger guys can sometimes be a bit eager to take to the front, but Cam understood what I was doing and I knew I had the pace in the final sector for the slipstream."

RESULTS

ALPINESTARS SUPERBIKE ROUND 2

1	J Waters	Duc	50
2	C Halliday	Yam	39
3	T Herfoss	Hon	38
4	G Allerton	BMW	33
5	A Sissis	Yam	32

STANDINGS AFTER 2 OF 7 ROUNDS

J Waters 126, T Herfoss 91, G Allerton 83, C Halliday 79, A Sissis 72

MICHELIN SUPERSPORT ROUND 2

1	C Dunker	Yam	41
2	O Simpson	Yam	37
3	H Nelson	Yam	29
4	T Lynch	Yam	28
5	S Nicholson	Yam	26

STANDINGS AFTER 2 OF 6 ROUNDS

T Lynch 82, O Simpson 74, J Lytras 72, J Passfield 68, C Dunker 63

SUPERSPORT 300 ROUND 2

1	B Demmery	Yam	71
2	C Swain	Yam	63
3	B Gawith	Yam	52
4	J Russo	Yam	51
5	H Snell	Yam	49

STANDINGS AFTER 2 OF 6 ROUNDS

B Demmery 128, C Swain 114, J Russo 109, H Snell 102, B Gawith 102

R3 CUP ROUND 1

1	B Demmery	Yam	70
2	C Swain	Yam	63
3	B Gawith	Yam	52
4	J Russo	Yam	52
5	H Snell	Yam	49

OCEANIA JUNIOR CUP ROUND 1

1	H Fordyce	Yam	64
2	V Knezovic	Yam	57
3	R Nauta	Yam	50
4	J Fyffe	Yam	46
5	B Paige	Yam	43

SUREFLIGHT SUPERBIKE MASTERS ROUND 1

1	K Watson	Yam	75
2	T Corser	Yam	60
3	C Glock	Suz	44
4	R Young	Duc	44
5	B Phelan	Suz	43

SUPERBIKE MASTERS

KING KEO

12

13

14

KEO WATSON (Silkolene) has taken a clean sweep of the Superbike Masters, winning all three races in convincing style aboard his booming P6F13-class, 1300cc C & M Motorcycles-prepared Yamaha FZR1000.

Two-time world Superbike champion Troy Corser was Watson's closest rival, piloting a Yamaha TZ750 (P5F1) to second place, with Aaron Bennett (Well Sprung) on a Suzuki GSX1290 (P5UN) finishing third.

With a variety of machines and eras represented in the 28-strong field, Rob Young was the first P6F7 bike home, taking sixth on a Ducati 888 prepared by his father, Ron. Watson continued his dominance in race two, with the same podium results. In the damp race three, Corser took the lead to test the conditions with Watson pouncing on the final run down the straight.

Exclusive!

NEWS FROM THE PADDOCK BY MOTOGP COMMENTATOR **NEIL MORRISON**

MOTOGP

SPRINT BACKLASH!

Riders push back on new 2023 weekend format

THE INAUGURAL MotoGP Sprint race was 12 laps of thrilling action that resulted in Pecco Bagnaia beating Jorge Martin and Marc Marquez in a five-way fight. But conversely Luca Marini wiped out Enea Bastianini on the second lap, Joan Mir crashed into Fabio Quartararo on lap one and, with reduced practice time, riders were forced to take more risks.

Marini explained a reason for the aggression on show. "It's a bigger risk for everybody," he said. "Because there are 12 riders fighting for the podium instead of six." The grid understands how to approach a race at full distance, whereas this format is still new.

"I think we can train ourselves making sprint races, and understand a little bit better also how to manage," he said. "Because we know very well how the Sunday race is formed. There is a difficult part in the first four laps: everybody is trying to catch a better position. And then there are the last five laps: everybody is pushing for the win. While in the sprint race, it looks like every lap is like the first four or the last five laps of a Sunday race."

Quartararo was one of many voices who felt the level of aggression was too much and this new format will have similar negative consequences all year.

"There will be a big accident," he said. "It's a jungle. We are not in cars. In the future there will be many more crashes."

Some were so concerned by the decisions being taken above riders' heads that are impacting their safety, there were fresh calls for the formation of a riders' union.

"That's the future and it's something we need to have to avoid the problem Pol had on Friday or things like this," said Alex Marquez. "We need to talk to the riders about it. We need to see who is the first one to make the first step to have a riders' commission like other sports have."

Aleix Espargaro felt it was on the riders to reign some of their aggression in. "It's crazy and we cannot continue like this. This is not about Race Direction or teams; it's about us, the riders. If there is a last lap you can be aggressive. But come on: it's race one and four riders are in the hospital. I feel I know where the limit is but it looks like 80 percent of the grid doesn't know."

Yet there were other factors at play here. The grid is always eager at the first race of the season. Plus the grid was fresh from a two-day test at this track less than a fortnight before. As Marc Marquez said: "We need to wait more on other circuits. Here we have a very similar pace, because of the test, everybody has done many laps in the circuit. Everything is in a perfect way. So let's see. We are taking a lot, a lot, a lot of risk during all weekend, because the last 15 minutes of FP2 is a quali, then another quali in the morning, then the sprint race."

NEIL MORRISON

1. The aftermath of the Marini and Bastianini Sprint bingle **2.** Aleix Espargaro believes the riders have to take stock and reign in their exuberance **3.** Miller's team has tweaked the engine braking on his KTM, and it's done instant wonders **4.** Marquez skittles Oliveira on Sunday, with some riders calling for harsher sanctions on the multiple world champion **5.** Pol Espargaro's sickening crash

MOTOGP

MILLER FINDS HIS GROOVE

JACK MILLER and KTM appeared something approaching a lost cause at the close of testing. But the Australian showed he has the potential to be a force aboard the RC16 this year, producing a series of stunning performances over the weekend, challenging for the top five in both outings.

The key? KTM engineers have worked tirelessly to program the engine brake settings more to his liking, allowing him to decelerate expertly while sideways under braking.

"The thing is (sideways) coming into the corner. It was doing that the other day and I wasn't really decelerating. But having the bike in this position takes a lot of load off the front and I'm not as much on the razor's edge. They've been able to give me the sliding performance, but with the deceleration like a bike that is dead straight," he said.

Also rear grip - the bane of KTM's preseason - was one of Miller's strong suits in the Sprint, as he continually got great drive out of the final turn. Adjusting the power delivery was another key.

"I essentially hopped on this bike in Valencia and could've ridden this bike with an on-off switch for a throttle.

"Now we can ride the bike more like a normal bike." **NM**

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MOTOGP

MARQUEZ UNDER FIRE

MARC MARQUEZ was under fire after a wild Sunday in Portugal ended in a collision that bruised Miguel Oliveira's right hip, as well as potentially damaging some ligaments, and breaking a toe on Jorge Martin's right foot. What's more, he suffered a potentially fractured first metacarpal in his right hand, which was operated on Sunday evening.

While he was handed a double long-lap penalty for the upcoming race in Argentina, some of his peers called for a tougher sanction.

"What they said in the pre-race briefing was if you keep doing things, you will get stronger penalties," said Martin. "He keeps doing the same, so he needed to get a stronger penalty. But we all know it's Marc and they will do nothing - it's a shame."

Aleix Espargaro went one step further. "They have to ban him one race minimum," he said. "The speed he hit Miguel he could've destroyed the knee."

Aleix turned his ire on the FIM stewards, who penalised Joan Mir for a collision with Fabio Quartararo in the Sprint, but not Alex Marquez, who pushed Maverick Viñales wide in the same encounter.

"I'm not saying it was a penalty for Mir, but if you do it you have to do the other actions as well." **NM**

MOTOGP

PECCO SLAMS SAFETY

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PECCO BAGNAIA was quietly seething at the state of track safety at the Algarve International Circuit on Friday. The reigning world champion was not only nonplussed by the gravel traps, where the stones are bigger than they should be, but he felt the gravel was partly responsible for the extent of Pol Espargaro's crash.

Friday ended under a dark cloud after Espargaro's horrific crash. The GasGas rider crashed at Turn 10, flew through the gravel and impacted the trackside barrier at considerable speed, suffering a pulmonary contusion, jaw fracture and a fractured dorsal vertebra in the shattering process.

"It was a bad crash, but as big as like this. Because when Pol arrived to the gravel, he started to accelerate. And I think the air fence there is either small or not there at all."

And he also feels riders' complaints at the track have fallen on deaf ears of late.

"It's been four years that we are asking to change the safety of this track. Because the first time I arrived here, I did a track walk with my team and I sent a picture of the gravel which is too big to (ex-safety officer) Franco Uncini. They had time to change."

Series organiser Dorna reacted, installing a airfence - the scene of Esaprgaro's impact - on the outside of the corner on Saturday morning.

Espargaro will miss the Argentine GP and more than likely the Grand Prix of the Americas in mid-April. **NM**

AFT

DANIELS HUNGRY AS MEES LEADS

It's Yamaha versus Indian as Whale regroups for Singles victory

JARED MEES (Indian Motorcyle) has won the Yamaha Senoia Short Track over the weekend, pegging back important championship points against Estenson Yamaha rival Dallas Daniels.

Mees attempted to make a break in the main event but instead was made to work hard, eventually prevailing by 0.174 seconds from Daniels, with Estenson teammate JD Beach finishing third.

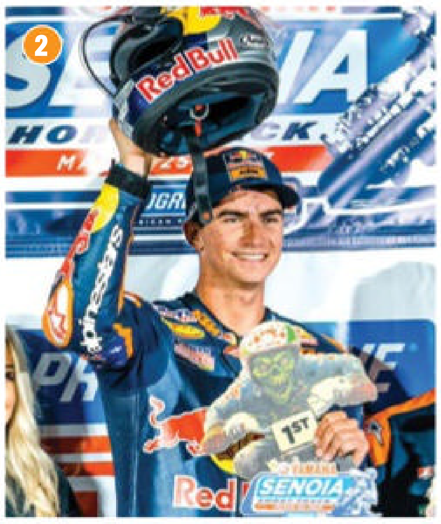
"Man, that was a duel… a battle… a fist fight in a phone booth," Mees said. "We rode super clean; we didn't touch – we came really close – but I didn't want to give that one up. Dallas is super hungry, and you can see it in his riding."

Daniels now has 71 points thanks to his double victory at the Daytona season opener, with Mees closing on 57.

In AFT Singles, Max Whale also struck back, taking a dominant victory on his factory-backed KTM to now sit third, 12 points behind teammate Kody Kopp. "I needed a good race today," Whale said. "Obviously, as a racer you want to win every time. It feels good to do this coming here from Daytona, where my head was hanging fairly low."

Fellow Aussie Tom Drane (Estenson Yamaha) survived a near highside while threatening the podium to eventually finish 13th. The series continues at the Arizona Super TT in Chandler, Arizona on 1 April.

MATT O'CONNELL



SUPERTWINS STANDINGS AFTER 3 OF 18 ROUNDS

POS	RIDER	POINTS	
1	D Daniels	Yam	71
2	J Mees	Ind	57
3	B Robinson	Ind	51
5	JD Beach	Yam	48
4	B Fisher	Ind	44

AFT SINGLES STANDINGS AFTER 3 OF 18 ROUNDS

POS	RIDER	POINTS	
1	K Kopp	KTM	65
2	D Gauthier	KTM	60
3	M Whale	KTM	53
4	T Brunner	Yam	48
5	J Ott	Hus	47
8	T Drane	Yam	30

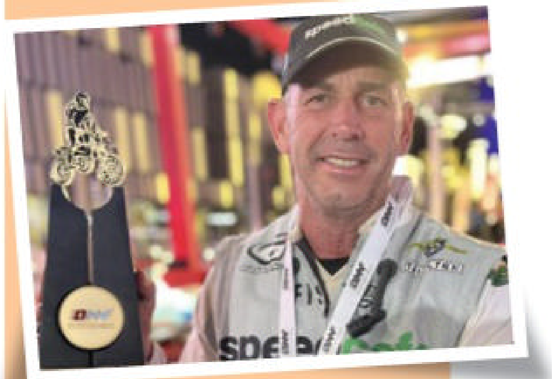
BRIEFS

RENNIE BACK TO RACE THE TT

RENNIE SCAYSBROOK has confirmed he'll contest the 2023 Isle of Man TT in June, campaigning a Honda CBR1000RR-R Fireblade for the hugely experienced Wilson Craig Racing team. The former AMCN staffer will campaign the Superbike, Superstock and Senior TT races as he moves to a Superbike for the time after making his debut last year on a Suzuki GSX-R600.

"Moving up from Supersport to Superbike means I'll pretty much be learning the course again - but it's exciting, and it's pretty amazing to already be riding with a team with such a good history," he said.

KEL BUCKLEY



HOULIHAN WINS IN QATAR

VICTORY IN the veterans' division of the Qatar International has seen Aussie Andrew Houlihan increase his lead in the seven-round FIM Baja Rally World Cup. Though he narrowly missed an outright podium in a strong field of 54 competitors, fourth position was a career best for the Albury-based privateer.

"The navigation was the toughest I've faced in five years of cross-country racing," he said. "But it's a great confidence builder as we head for the next round in the Spanish High Sierra." **PETER WHITAKER**

1. Mees after doing the business in Round 2 **2.** Whale was dominant in the AFT Singles class at Senoia **3.** Daniels dominated the Daytona leg on his Yamaha **4.** Drane was 13th at Senoia after a near highside took him out of a potential podium finish **5.** Rea finished on top at the Aragon WorldSBK test **6.** Vierge was second fastest as he continues to find more speed and consistency on the HRC machine **7.** Ferris (#111) left the field in his wake in the MX1 opener at Appin **8.** MX2 winner, Crawford **9.** Woods topped the MX3 results **10.** The MX1 podium: (L to R) Beaton, Clout and Ferris

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WORLDSBK

REA TOPS ARAGON TEST

JONATHAN REA has topped the timesheets after a two-day test at Motorland Aragon - although his main title rivals weren't in attendance. In terms of series regulars, it was himself and his KRT teammate Alex Lowes, HRC's Xavi Vierge and Iker Lecuona and WorldSBK rookie Bradley Ray (Motoxracing Yamaha), while Florian Marino tested for the Kawasaki squad and Isaac Vinales for TPR.

In terms of the combined times, only 0.103sec separated Rea from Lowes in fourth place, after two warm and dry days of action.

Mandalika podium getter Vierge was second quickest ahead of Lecuona, while Ray only got in laps on the afternoon of the second day, after some technical issues, placing him fifth.

Australian Luke Power was also in attendance, along with his new Motozoo Racing by Puccetti WorldSSP teammate Tom Booth-Amos. Booth-Amos was quickest of the pair, but Power had to overcome some technical issues with his ZX-6R.

GORDON RITCHIE

POS	RIDER	BIKE	TIME
1	J Rea	Kaw	1m49.482s
2	X Vierge	Hon	1m49.565s
3	I Lecuona	Hon	1m49.584s
4	A Lowes	Kaw	1m49.585s
5	B Ray	Yam	1m51.716s

PROMX

FERRIS AND TANTI TUSSLE

DEFENDING THOR MX1 Aussie motocross champion Aaron Tanti (CDR Yamaha Monster Energy) has claimed the Round 2 victory in Appin, NSW, with his 3-1-3 scorecard eclipsing Dean Ferris (Brisbane Motorcycles Yamaha, 1-5-1) and Boost Mobile Honda Racing's Jed Beaton in third (4-3-2) for the overall.

After smoking the field in qualifying, Ferris blitzed the field in the first moto, winning by more than 30 seconds ahead of Kirk Gibbs (KTM Racing Team), with Tanti in third.

Tanti returned fire in part one of the second moto, taking the win from teammate Luke Clout (CDR Yamaha Monster Energy), followed by Beaton in third -while Ferris crossed the line in fifth following a crash.

The second part of Moto 2 saw Ferris once again dominate, with the Yamaha rider taking the win ahead of Beaton and Tanti.

Tanti and Ferris now sit equal first (45pt) in the MX1 championship after two rounds, followed by Beaton (40), Gibbs (37) and Clout (30).

Also on the Appin card, Nathan Crawford (KTM Racing Team) took two from two in the MX2 class, with Todd Wilson (Terrafirma Honda Racing) taking second overall (2-2) followed by New Zealander Brodie Connolly (Polyflor Honda Racing) in third.

GasGas-mounted Ky Woods took the MX3 round honours with 1-3 finishes ahead of Liam Owens (Husqvarna) and Byron Dennis (GasGas).

The series now moves to Wodonga, Vic for round three on 16 April.

PETE VORST

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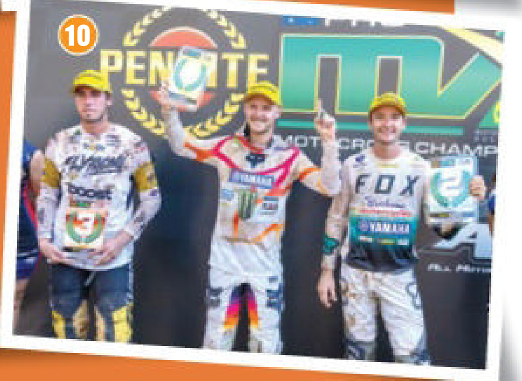
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SPEEDWAY

AUSSIES A-PLENTY

THE 2023 speedway season in the UK 'opened' with a trio of washouts but all teams across the three league competitions will hopefully be up and running in coming weeks.

At last count, there were 26 Australians who will start the season in at least one of those leagues, and there is another group of Aussies who will compete in Poland, Germany and Denmark.

There are seven teams in the Premiership, the top tier of league racing in the UK, and there are Australians among all those line-ups. There are nine teams in the Championship, with only Glasgow not tracking a rider from Down Under. The National Development League boasts eight teams, only three of which are stand-alone teams as the other five clubs are also in either the Premiership or Championship.

A change in the regulations concerning riders' eligibility to compete at this level has been a boost for four Australians - James Pearson at Belle Vue, Jacob Hook at Edinburgh, Luke Killeen at Oxford and Connor Bailey at Workington - who are able to return this year.

PETER BAKER

PREMIERSHIP	
BELLE VUE	Brady Kurtz, Jaimon Lidsey
IPSWICH	Jason Doyle, Keynan Rew
KING'S LYNN	Josh Pickering
LEICESTER	Max Fricke, Nick Morris, Justin Sedgmen, Jake Allen
PETERBOROUGH	Ben Cook
SHEFFIELD	Jack Holder
WOLVERHAMPTON	Sam Masters, Ryan Douglas, Rory Schlein, Zach Cook

CHAMPIONSHIP	
BERWICK	Jye Etheridge, Rory Schlein
BIRMINGHAM	James Pearson, Justin Sedgmen, Nick Morris, Ty Proctor
EDINBURGH	Josh Pickering, Jacob Hook, Kye Thomson
OXFORD	Sam Masters, Cameron Heeps, Luke Killeen
PLYMOUTH	Jake Turner (NZ)
POOLE	Ben Cook, Zach Cook
REDCAR	Connor Bailey
SCUNTHORPE	Zaine Kennedy, Jake Allen, Ryan Douglas

1. Russo (#72) gets the jump in the first 190cc race **2.** Textbook: Dunker looking ahead to the next turn **3.** Watts en route to victory in the 190cc opener **4.** Watts and Dunker enjoyed a doozy scrap in Race 2 **5.** Paige and Ayad in the 160cc class **6.** Henry (#36) and Ayad (#20) lead the way

MINIGP

MORE CUBES FOR GP FEEDER CLASS

MiniGP kicks off the 2023 season with new 190cc class

THE 2023 FIM MiniGP Australia Series kicked off at the Port Melbourne Go Kart Track on 11-12 March, with Cameron Dunker and Harrison Watts jointly taking the round win in the newly formed 190cc class, while Jake Paige recorded a double victory to take out the 160cc spoils.

ASBK regular Levi Russo took pole position with a 51.768s lap. Russo continued his form throughout Race 1, battling with ASBK Supersport champ Dunker and leading until lap 14. A move from Dunker saw them both run off track, leaving last year's 160cc championship winner Watts capitalise and claim victory.

Dunker made it back on track for second place, while Hudson Thompson completed the podium.

Race 2 saw disaster for Russo again, this time losing the front on the opening lap. This gave the initial upperhand to Dunker before Watts rallied to set up a grandstand finish. Dunker won, but only just.

"It was the last lap, last corner, with a healthy lead when we caught up to lapped traffic," said Watts. "Down the straight I got pushed to the outside and finished the race on the grass in second."

Thompson again completed the podium, while the win for Dunker meant he finished the weekend equal with Watts in points for the round.

In the 160cc class, Paige took victory in Race 1 after starting third in a field of 13. Paige snatched the lead from polesitter Isaac Ayad on the opening lap, building a lead of about one second at the chequered flag.

Ayad, who had knocked almost 2.5sec off the previous qualifying best lap the day before, finished second with Rikki Henry in third.

In the second race, Paige was again dominant, taking the lead on lap three from Ayad and holding it to the line by 4sec to Henry. Behind him Ayad filled the podium, but it was tight all the way to seventh place, with a highlight being Jed Fyffe setting a new lap record on the final lap.

MATT O'CONNELL

WHAT'S NEW FOR 2023

THIS SEASON, the 190cc class is introduced for 12-16 year olds riding GP-2 machines with 12-inch wheels. The 160cc class is for 10-14 year olds on the GP-0 (10-inch wheels). Only countries that have run a 160cc championship have been permitted to run the 190cc class for 2023.

At the end of the season, the top three riders from the 190cc class will qualify for the World Series in Valencia, with the top two invited from the 160cc class. This season will also see the introduction of the Cameron Park circuit near Newcastle, as well as three-time ASBK champ Wayne Maxwell conducting tuition on the Friday before each round.

FIM MINIGP 190CC ROUND 1			
1	C Dunker	Ova	45
2	H Watts	Ova	45
3	H Thompson	Ova	32
4	J Newman	Ova	26
5	B Paige	Ova	21

FIM MINIGP 160CC ROUND 1			
1	J Paige	Ova	50
2	R Henry	Ova	36
3	I Ayad	Ova	36
4	H Corney	Ova	26
5	J Fyffe	Ova	22

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INTERVIEW **MATT O'CONNELL**

ALANA BARATTO

FIM Women in Motorcycling Commission member, Ducati's marketing boss, Australia's WIM chair and a Motorcycling Australia board member – this go-getter wears a few hats but is working towards one goal

As a guy, I see things through the lens of a guy. Collectively, are men doing their bit to include women or can we do more?
From my experience, the men in our sport are supportive and committed to building upon the participation of women. The barriers which exist for women participating in motorsport cannot be soley attributed to the attitude of men. Historically, the sport has been male dominated and, as such, the sport became largely structured to appeal to a male audience.

Together with our male colleagues, we are working on redeveloping certain aspects of the sport to be more inclusive of women and make the sport more inviting for women to participate. The initiatives we work on at Motorcycling Australia range from grassroots level all the way through to national level; it is a case of reconsidering what has always been done.

Naturally, the level of success we have is dependent on individual and community support across all levels.

We see the word misogyny thrown around a lot in sport and in politics – is that a problem in the motorcycling world?
I think the word misogyny has been used a lot in recent times and the interpretation of the word has been diluted: it has become a common label. The definition of the word around 'hatred' or 'prejudice' against women is not something that comes to mind when I think of our sport. People who work in the sport are driven by passion; passion is the absolute foundation.

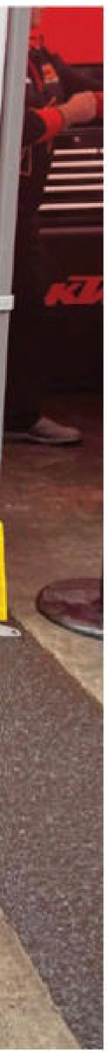
In my experience if you have a passion for motorcycles, you are respected based on this. There are of course instances of this type of bias, however we hope that through our work these instances will diminish further as we continue to progress our programs.

We've seen what Women In Motorcycling (WIM) is trying to achieve with greater participation and involvement for women in the industry as a whole, not just as riders. What kind of feedback do you observe as obstacles to achieving those aims?
Australia has one of the highest participation rates of females racing; this is a huge achievement. This success is due to the strong junior program at local and state levels, which is very accessible in our country.

The biggest trend we have identified is with women leaving the sport as young adults and returning later in life. Motorcycling needs to be a sustainable choice for women while they juggle the many other commitments and responsibilities of day-to-day life.

Who are some women that inspire you?
I cannot say there is one woman that inspires me above all others. All strong women who have worked hard and have chased their dream despite the challenges,

1. Female participation in junior racing is strong in Australia **2.** A track walk during the hugely successful Women's Circuit Racing Academy in 2022
3. ...just look at the overall numbers! **4.** The joy of motorcycling at a young age **5.** Surveying the scene



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> "PEOPLE WHO WORK IN THE SPORT ARE DRIVEN BY PASSION; PASSION IS THE ABSOLUTE FOUNDATION"

inspire me. I am surrounded by many women who embody this description, women who I call my family, my colleagues and my friends. You can say that I am inspired every day!

Out of all the initiatives on offer by WIM, what gets the most interest?
We have seen a huge appetite from women and the industry in general for events and experiences that offer women a non-intimidating environment which allow them to have fun and develop their skills. This is particularly evident in the growth of women participating in offroad events, but we also witnessed this in our Women's Circuit Racing Academy which was held last year. Women from across the country travelled long distances to the event, just so they could spend time with likeminded people.

We also have initiatives with club development guidelines to help local clubs create a welcoming environment for women. Our mentoring program aims to see more women in the management of the sport, our transition of grid girls at racing events to the introduction of brand ambassadors, as well as our sponsorship guidelines, designed to help women develop their profiles and obtain greater sponsorship opportunities.

There is no simple algorithm to increase female participation as there are many complicated layers to this issue. The approach we have taken with Motorcycling Australia and the WIM is to work across to the sport with various partners to reduce the barriers for women.

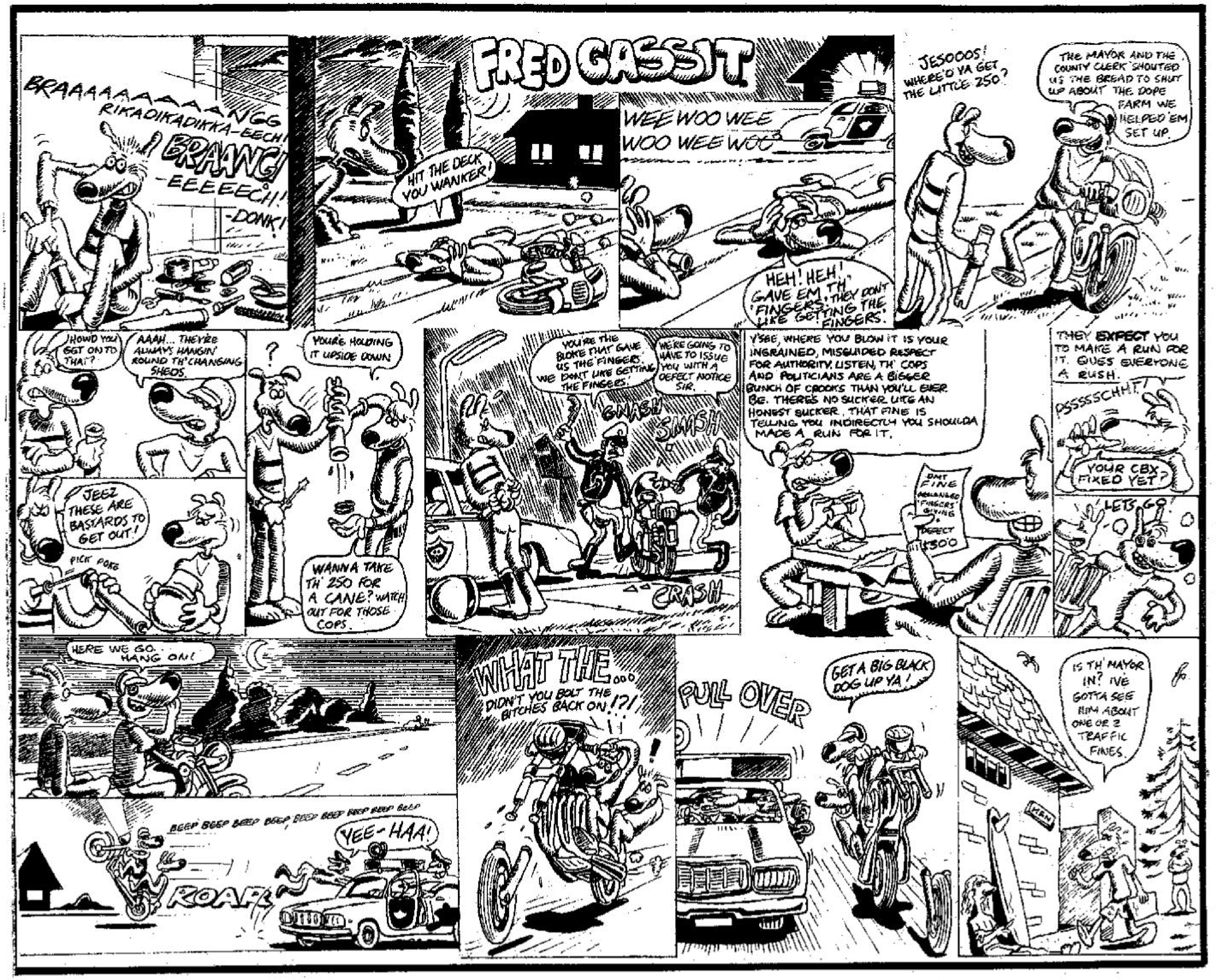
For those who don't know, you're in marketing and have worked across a lot of brands. Where do women sit in the marketing sphere when you're crunching the numbers? Are women racers marketable?
For sure! The reach and awareness of motorcycle racing at state and national level in Australia is limited in comparison to other popular sports. This directly affects investment for the championships, teams and, of course, the riders.

This topic is even more critical when we look at it from a female rider's perspective because the visibility women receive in our sport is even less. This in turn means women who are competing are often forced to work outside of the sport in order to support themselves and their racing efforts, juggling their focus and reducing the viability of pursuing a professional racing career. As a sport we need to find ways to give women more exposure so that they can attract greater sponsorship and make a career out of it like their male counterparts. We are seeing the tide turning with this in motocross with the MXW class this season, which is absolutely fantastic.

From the women I've watched in road racing, it's clear talent isn't holding them back. I feel like there are a good number who have outgrown SSPT300, for example. What is impeding girls from competing in the larger capacity classes at a national level? Is greater participation a goal?
This is a continuing topic for us not only nationally but also globally with our colleagues at FIM. We agree, there is no shortage of talent, and we are working hard to identify the barriers to accessibility, development and support. For the most part, we think in road racing the barriers are a combination of all three elements, so we are working together with FIM Oceania and the FIM to assess what initiatives can be implemented to see greater growth in this area.

What does success look like for WIM?
As a group we have received huge support which has allowed us to see some really great progress, and this is encouraging. It is important to remember that it will take time to see more women participating across all disciplines.

Ultimately the success of the committee will be when this group dissolves, meaning that the work is complete, and our sport has equal opportunity and participation across genders and disciplines. We are still some time away from achieving this, but that ultimately is the goal.


FRED GASSIT
BRAAAAAAAAAANGG
RIKADIKADIKKA-EECH!
BRAANG!
-EEEEEECH!!
-DONK!
HIT THE DECK YOU WANKER!
WEE WOO WEE WOO WEE WOO
HEH! HEH! GAVE EM TH' 'FINGERS,' THEY DON'T LIKE GETTING THE 'FINGERS.'
JESOOOS! WHERE'D YA GET THE LITTLE 250?
THE MAYOR AND THE COUNTY CLERK SHOUTED US THE BREAD TO SHUT UP ABOUT THE DOPE FARM WE HELPED 'EM SET UP.
HOW'D YOU GET ONTO THAT?
AAAH... THEY'RE ALWAYS HANGIN' ROUND TH' CHANGING SHEDS.
JEEZ THESE ARE BASTARDS TO GET OUT!
PICK POKE
?
YOU'RE HOLDING IT UPSIDE DOWN.
WANNA TAKE TH' 250 FOR A CANE? WATCH OUT FOR THOSE COPS.
YOU'RE THE BLOKE THAT GAVE US THE 'FINGERS.' WE DON'T LIKE GETTING THE FINGERS.
WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO ISSUE YOU WITH A DEFECT NOTICE SIR.
GNASH
SMASH
CRASH
Y'SEE, WHERE YOU BLOW IT IS YOUR INGRAINED, MISGUIDED RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY. LISTEN, TH' COPS AND POLITICIANS ARE A BIGGER BUNCH OF CROOKS THAN YOU'LL EVER BE. THERE'S NO SUCKER LIKE AN HONEST SUCKER. THAT FINE IS TELLING YOU INDIRECTLY YOU SHOULDA MADE A RUN FOR IT.
DMT FINE ARRANGED 'FINGERS' GIVING + DEFECT $500
THEY EXPECT YOU TO MAKE A RUN FOR IT. GIVES EVERYONE A RUSH.
PSSSSSCHHT!
YOUR CBX FIXED YET?
LET'S GO!
HERE WE GO. HANG ON!
BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP, BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP
YEE-HAA!
ROAR
WHAT THE...
DIDN'T YOU BOLT THE BITCHES BACK ON!?!
PULL OVER
GET A BIG BLACK DOG UP YA!
IS TH' MAYOR IN? I'VE GOTTA SEE HIM ABOUT ONE OR 2 TRAFFIC FINES.
MAN

Australian Motorcycle News road test photographs are posed for by skilled, professional riders under controlled circumstances. Attempting to imitate their actions may be dangerous. Australian Motorcycle News supports and endorses rider training and wearing protective riding gear… even to bed if you're on an AMCN shootout and you have a drone buzzing around above you piloted by a somewhat inebriated workmate who doesn't know when it's time to down tools and get some shuteye. Give it a rest, PV!

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